HIGH CHURCH POLITICS:

BEING

A SEASONABLE APPEAL

TO THE

Friends of the Britiſh Conſtitution,

AGAINST THE

PRACTICES AND PRINCIPLES

OF

HIGH CHURCHMEN;

AS EXEMPLIFIED IN THE LATE OPPOSITION TO THE REPEAL OF THE TEST LAWS,

AND IN THE RIOTS AT BIRMINGHAM.

Verily, our High Church bigots and ragamuffins are the undoubted deſcendants of Diana's tories at Epheſus, ſixteen hundred years ago. Nor is the breed one whit mended.

Pray mark the different manner of our diſputing with them, and the contrary arguments we uſe! We appeal to the Bible; they cry 'the Church,' and anſwer the word of the Lord with a brickbat: oh! horrible! *The Craftſmen.*

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M.DCC.XCII.

ERRATA.

Page 1, line 3, after *the*, insert *laſt*.
19, 20, dele *majority of the*.
21, 11, for *their*, read *the formality of a*.
36, 7, for *the Biſhops*, read *his*.
54, 25, before *threatened*, insert *was charged with having*.
99, 14, for *Weſtminſter Hall*, read *the Houſe of Commons*.
109, 19, for *his*, read *thoſe*.
121, 11, for *William*, read *Williams*.
123, 21, for *the*, read *its*.
146, 21, after *diſſatisfied*, insert *as the Reviewer ſuppoſes*.
160, 12, for *his*, read *their*.

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NOTE

NOTE to page 29, line 3, after *compenſation.*

THE ſum granted by parliament in 1716, to make good theſe damages, was £.5579. 15*s.* 3½*d.*; being the amount returned by inquiſitions taken on commiſſions iſſued out of the Court of Exchequer, in conſequence of this addreſs of the Houſe of Commons.

The liberality of government was not confined to the above ſum; for the diſtinguiſhed loyalty of the Diſſenters had been marked by the deſtruction of their property in other parts of the kingdom. At Mancheſter, &c. their places of worſhip were rebuilt at the public expence. This was before the Riot Act took effect. But that act has not been an excuſe to government for withholding its bounty, in caſes for which no compenſation is provided. In 1716, the mug-houſe of one Read, in Saliſbury-court, in Fleet-ſtreet, was attacked by a High Church mob. In defending himſelf he ſhot one of the rioters, and was tried for murder, and acquitted. The mob had deſtroyed part of the furniture in his houſe, but had not begun to demoliſh the houſe itſelf, in which caſe alone the hundred is bound to make good the damage. The magiſtrates read the proclamation in the Riot Act; and for ſtaying beyond the limited time, five of the rioters were executed in Fleet-ſtreet. Read received £.400 from government for his damages and charges; and one Gill alſo, who kept another mug-houſe in Cheapſide, received at the ſame time £.200 for his damages. In the riots in London, in the year 1780, damages ſuſtained by Catholics to the amount of ſeveral thouſands of pounds, which could not be recovered under the act, were paid by government. The Commons had reſolved to addreſs the King to make good the loſſes of the foreign embaſſadors, and to proſecute the rioters; but upon his ſending a meſſage, that he had ordered ſuch proſecution, the addreſs was not preſented. The chief magiſtrate of the city was proſecuted by the Attorney-general, without any application from the ſufferers, for not having ſuppreſſed the riots in the firſt inſtance by the civil power; he was convicted, and eſcaped puniſhment only by death.

INTRO-

INTRODUCTION.

AMONG the numerous pamphlets circulated by the High Church party about the time of the motion in the Houſe of Commons reſpecting the repeal of the Teſt Laws, there was none ſo much applauded and admired by them, as the "Review of the Caſe of the Proteſtant Diſſenters," which has been very generally, but in charity I hope *falſely*, aſcribed to the pen of Dr. Horſley, the Biſhop of St. David's. The Reverend Spencer Madan ſeems to have a high opinion of this performance, and to credit this report; for in his letter to Dr. Prieſtley he ſays, "There is one publication, it is true, which, perhaps, it will be kind "in me to recommend to your peruſal, from your "known paſſion for controverſy, as I think you "may employ yourſelf upon it during the reſt of "your life, provided you will undertake for once, "not merely to anſwer, but refute, its arguments. "It is entitled a 'Review of the Caſe of the Pro-"teſtant Diſſenters;' not that I expect you will "feel diſpoſed to meddle with it, *as I ſuſpect it* "*may be traced to the ſame powerful and victorious* "*hand under which you have already ſmarted.*"

Sir Henry Englefield, in a letter addreſſed to Biſhop Horſley, has pathetically conjured him to deny the publication, if he was not the author, that certain charges againſt the Catholics, contained in it*, might not be circulated under the ſanction of ſo great an authority. He has conjured in vain, for the Biſhop has not denied the publication.

Who is really the author of the "Review" is not a matter of much conſequence to the public, or myſelf. He may have reaſons for concealing his name, and I am not diſpoſed to enquire into them; it is enough for my purpoſe, and a ſufficient juſtification for having ſelected from this work the arguments of the High Church party, that they themſelves triumphantly applaud it. With them it is a model of excellence; and in truth ſo it is, if excellence can conſiſt in a total want of charity and candour; in contradiction and inconſiſtency; in weakneſs and ſophiſtry; in miſrepreſentation and falſehood. For treating ſuch a work and its author with aſperity, no apology is neceſſary. The unlicenſed plunderer of private property ſins leſs

* The caſe which is profeſſed to be reviewed is that publiſhed in 1787, and the Review was written, if not printed, in that year, though not publiſhed till 1790. Its author gives his readers to underſtand, that "as the real caſe of the Diſſenters "*is not altered* (however the words of it have varied yearly), "the tract is publiſhed as it was originally written, without the "leaſt variation." The fact is, that the *caſes* publiſhed between 1787 and 1790 were materially altered, and in particular *all that related to the Catholics* was omitted. My readers may from this inſtance judge how far the reviewer has written under the influence of *truth*.

againſt

againſt ſociety, than he, however exalted his rank, who ſcruples not deliberately to ſacrifice truth and juſtice on the altar of controverſy.

That the "Review" remained long unanſwered by the Diſſenters may be owing to this circumſtance, that though it was printed two years before, it was artfully kept from the public till a few weeks only preceding the laſt debate; and *after* the debate it was not likely that an anſwer would be much attended to. But there is another reaſon ſtill more ſtrong; for the Diſſenters felt themſelves ſo little preſſed by its arguments, that, but for the plaudits of their enemies, it might have paſſed for ever unnoticed by them. On the part of the Catholics, Lord Petre and Sir Henry Englefield have attacked it with much ſpirit and ſucceſs. The latter in particular has ſhewn, that its author can have no pretenſions to the character of a logical reaſoner, or a moral man.

It was, at one time, my intention to have anſwered the "Review" at ſome length, but recollecting that this incomparable performance had paſſed through only *one* edition, and the public opinion had ſtamped its inſignificance, I have abandoned the deſign, and feel the leſs regret at having done ſo, ſince I have juſt had an opportunity of ſeeing a late excellent publication, intitled "*Obſervations on the Teſt Laws in Reply to* A Review of the Caſe of the Proteſtant Diſſenters."

It has been ſo confidently aſſerted of late, that the political principles of the Diſſenters are hoſtile

to, and thoſe of the Church congenial with, the conſtitution of Britain, that it becomes neceſſary to enquire what thoſe principles really are; the tenets of the Church of England are therefore freely diſcuſſed in the following pages; but the reviewer, in common with other High Church writers, has provoked it. When he, tauntingly, attributes to Nonconformiſts, principles, "which "in certain ſituations and certain times would ren- "der them *not the beſt* ſubjects of the Britiſh con- "ſtitution," he forgets that paſſive obedience and non-reſiſtance are ſtill the avowed principles of the Church, and that there is too much reaſon to apprehend that in *no* ſituation, and at *no* time, can a believer in *all* its doctrines be a faithful ſubject to *our preſent* free conſtitution.

The clergy of the Church of England may be divided into two claſſes, the HIGH and the LOW Church. The latter wiſh well to the general cauſe of religion, and prefer its intereſts to thoſe of their own or any other ſect. They ſee no danger in reforming, as occaſion requires, the errors of an eſtabliſhment, and adapting it to the exiſting ſtate of mankind; and truſt for its ſecurity to the intrinſic worth of its doctrines, and its hold on the affections of the people. The former would advance *their own ſect* in preference to true Chriſtianity, and mixing politics with religion, would ſacrifice its deareſt intereſts to promote the temporal concerns of their party in the ſtate. Having no dependance on the power of religion unaided by the civil government, and yet claiming a divine commiſſion, they will allow of no alteration in the

the eſtabliſhed ſyſtem, and oppoſe the cry of "the "danger of the church," to every attempt at improvement. To ſuch clergymen, and to *ſuch only*, I beg may be applied the ſeemingly harſh expreſſions, in which I have occaſionally expreſſed my ſentiments of the conduct of our eccleſiaſtical politicians. I can ſay with Biſhop Horſley, "We are engaged in a ſubject in which I hold "it my duty to diſplay my argument in its ut-"moſt force, and even to uſe pretty freely that "*high ſeaſoning* of controverſy, which may intereſt "the reader's attention; but I would not wilfully "give offence by harſh words, from which the "reaſoning may acquire neither force nor luſ-"tre *."

Biſhop Horſley is the only man bold enough to make it his *public pretenſion, his pride, and his glory*, to be called a HIGH CHURCHMAN; not indeed, he tells us, as a bigot to the ſecular rights of the prieſthood, but as enjoying a *ſpiritual* commiſſion for the adminiſtration of our Lord's proper kingdom, which makes thoſe to whom it is delegated ſomething more than the mere ſervants of the ſtate †. The firſt queſtion is, *whence and how* this ſpiritual authority is veſted in the preſent clergy. Biſhop Horſley, in another work‡, ſtrongly

* Biſhop Horſley's Tracts in controverſy with Dr. Prieſtley.

† The Charge of Samuel Lord Biſhop of St. David's to the Clergy of his Dioceſe at his primary Viſitation in 1790, p. 34.

‡ Tracts in controverſy with Dr. Prieſtley, by Samuel Lord Biſhop of St. David's. 1789. p. 291, 292, 293.

intimates that it has been derived from the apoſtles by perpetual ſucceſſion; but as Biſhop Warburton (who yielded to no biſhop in chriſtendom in ſtickling for the rights of his church as far as they were tenable) has admitted the apoſtolical ſucceſſion was loſt in the Engliſh Church at the revolution, we will leave Biſhop Horſley to overthrow what his brother more wiſely admits*, and ſupport the *jure divino* right of epiſcopacy as he can. He ſeems to have given judgment againſt himſelf when he ſays, that "in every church, connected like our church "with the ſtate by an eſtabliſhment, *even the ſpiritual* "*authority cannot be conferred without the conſent of* "*the ſupreme civil magiſtrate*," for this makes the efficacy of the tranſmiſſion of this authority to depend on human laws.

But though it ſhould be admitted that eccleſiaſtics may *poſſeſs* ſpiritual authority derived from ſome other ſource, they can claim to *exerciſe* it here only as they do their ſecular rights, by virtue of the law of the land; and therefore, in the exerciſe of it, ſtand in the relation of mere *hired ſervants*

* Biſhop Horſley calls in queſtion the ſpiritual authority of ſome diſſenting miniſters, in rather gentler terms than an honeſt Nonjuror did that of the whole body of the Engliſh clergy after the loſs of the apoſtolic ſucceſſion at the revolution. According to Dr. Hickes, "Their prayers are ſins; their ſacraments "are no ſacraments; their abſolutions null and of no force; "God ratifies nothing in heaven which they do in his name "upon earth; they, and all that adhere to them, can claim "no benefit of God's promiſes, nor remiſſion of ſins, through "the merits of Chriſt's blood; nay, though they ſhould die "martyrs their martyrdom would not be accepted."

to the ſtate. If the Church ſtill poſſeſſes ſome ſpiritual authority beyond what human legiſlation can convey, let us beſeech Biſhop Horſley to explain (among other difficulties) * how the non-juring biſhops at the revolution could poſſibly be deprived of it by an act of parliament, and why the ſpiritual commiſſion of the biſhops conſecrated by them after deprivation was not valid; for all that was more than human legiſlation could convey certainly reſted in them, and as certainly might be tranſmitted by them to others. Let him tell us too, how other biſhops could be ſuſpended from the exerciſe of their ſpiritual commiſſion by the ſentence of lay judges, or wholly deprived of it by the ordinances of temporal legiſlators; and why it was neceſſary for Engliſh prelates to have the ſanction of the ſtate for the delegation of this ſpiritual authority, *without any ſecular rights whatever*, to the biſhops in America. In explaining theſe difficulties, no arguments drawn from the hypotheſis of an alliance between church and ſtate can be admitted, unleſs it is firſt ſhewn that ſuch an alliance is the foundation of the eſtabliſhed church of England. Dr. Horſley aſſerts the divine commiſſion of the epiſcopal miniſtry †, and is of opinion that it is of apoſtolical inſtitution, and that the ſucceſſion has been regularly deduced from the time of Chriſt, or his apoſtles. This ſucceſſion, if traced from the apoſ-

* Theſe, and other difficulties here alluded to, will be more fully ſtated when the ſheet anchor of modern High Churchmen, the hypotheſis of an alliance between church and ſtate, is under conſideration.

† Preface to Tracts in controverſy with Dr. Prieſtley.

tles, muſt be through *the pope and his biſhops*, or, if from Chriſt, through *a race of jure divino kings*; and it will be curious to ſee, in this enlightened age, *through which* he will chuſe to attempt the derivation.

I am not diſpoſed to feel animoſity againſt any men, becauſe they differ from me in opinion, or maintain their own ſentiments by fair argument; but I hold in abhorrence the depravity of which the High Church clergy and their followers have lately given ſtriking inſtances, in the wicked arts too ſucceſsfully uſed to inflame the paſſions of the people againſt the Proteſtant Diſſenters. I acknowledge with pleaſure, that among the eſtabliſhed clergy there are many men of liberal minds and exemplary characters; men, who cannot approve the conduct of the High Church party, or condeſcend to wield, as the weapons of controverſy, calumny and falſehood. With them I cordially unite in good wiſhes for the long continuance of our preſent happy form of government, conſiſting of a king, lords, and commons; and though my regard for the Church of England has been ſomewhat diminiſhed of late, I am not *yet* an enemy to church eſtabliſhments in general, eſpecially in countries where they have long prevailed. I am not inclined to object to the ſtate's giving a preference to that religion which is approved of by the majority of the people; nor have I diſcovered that there is any thing ſinful in an epiſcopal form of church government. I " can ſee without pain

" or

" or grudging, an archbiſhop precede a duke;" and " a biſhop of Durham, or a biſhop of Win-" cheſter in poſſeſſion of ten thouſand pounds a " year." But an eſtabliſhment, whatever may be its form, ought to be accompanied with the enjoyment of religious liberty, in the fulleſt extent, by thoſe who diſſent from it: juſtice requires that they ſhould labour under no penalties or diſabilities on account of their religious opinions. Here indeed the Church of England ſtands in need of great reformation; for, according to the miſtaken notions of former ages, ſhe *ſtill* abſurdly claims a power to perſecute. Nor are her principles reſpecting civil liberty conſiſtent with our preſent free conſtitution. It is not therefore ſurpriſing that the zealots for the Church ſhould oppoſe the juſt claims of the Diſſenters, or defame the beſt friends of *that* conſtitution as ſeditious ſubjects; but it is only from a total ignorance of the principles of High Churchmen that the nation at large can be induced to fall in with their party ſchemes. Let the people of England, and eſpecially the *true* Whigs, beware; let them remember that the High Church party has unfortunately made a conſpicuous figure in the annals of England, and conſtantly exerted its influence for the deſtruction of the preſent conſtitution, and uniformly, though ſometimes covertly, ſupported the doctrines of paſſive obedience and non-reſiſtance. The danger of the Church, whether real or pretended, has ever been its watch-word, and the inſtant that ſignal has been given, as by ſome powerful magic, all liberality of ſentiment,

ment, all charity and candour have diſappeared among them. *By that cry*, in the reign of queen Anne, the throne had nearly been reſtored to the Stuart race; *by that cry*, ſeditious tumults were raiſed to prevent the acceſſion of the preſent family, and two rebellions excited againſt the monarchs of it*; and *by that cry*, as may be ſeen in the enſuing pages, though more faintly expreſſed, the

* The following extract from the ſpeech of George I. to both houſes of parliament, on September 21ſt, 1715, ſtrongly proves this.

" It was ſcarce to be imagined, that any of my proteſtant " ſubjects, who have known and enjoyed the benefits of our " excellent conſtitution, and have heard of the great dangers " they were wonderfully delivered from by the happy revo- " lution, ſhould by any arts and management be drawn into " meaſures that muſt at once deſtroy their religion and liber- " ties, and ſubject them to popery and arbitrary power; but " ſuch has been our misfortune, that too many of my people " have been deluded, and made inſtrumental to the Preten- " der's deſigns, *who had never dared to think of invading us, or* " *raiſing a rebellion, had he not been encouraged by the ſucceſs his* " *emiſſaries and adherents have already had in ſtirring up riots* " *and tumults, and by the farther hopes they entertain of raiſing in-* " *ſurrections in many parts of my kingdoms.*

" *The endeavouring to perſuade my people, that the church of* " *England is in danger under my government, has been the main* " *artifice employed in carrying on this wicked and traitorous deſign.* " This inſinuation, after the ſolemn aſſurance I have given, and " my having laid hold on all opportunities to do every thing " that may tend to the advantage of the church of England, is " both unjuſt and ungrateful; nor can I believe ſo groundleſs " and malicious a calumny can make any impreſſion upon " the minds of my faithful ſubjects; or that they can be ſo " far miſled as to think the church of England is to be ſecured " by ſetting a popiſh Pretender on the throne."

Diſſenters

Diſſenters were defeated in their laſt application to obtain a repeal of the Teſt Laws, and a ſpirit of ſavage bigotry raiſed, which deſtroyed the property and endangered the lives of peaceable ſubjects. Such is the formidable power of the church, even in this enlightened country, when its *prieſts* think fit to work upon the prejudices of their bigotted followers*! Through thoſe prejudices an apprehenſion of danger may be inſtilled in the midſt of ſecurity and peace, and the ſocial intercourſe of life converted into bitter jealouſy and hatred.

* The power of the clergy, and their influence over the minds of the people, are well deſcribed in the following paſſage: "Crowned heads always have thought it their intereſt to keep "meaſures with them: miniſters of ſtate have not been able to "trick ſucceſsfully, and play the knave, without their leave "and aſſiſtance; they take advantage, and make their market "of all factions and diſturbances in ſtates, and apply them to "their own benefit; knaves ſhelter themſelves under their "protection; hypocrites court, and ſeem to admire them, and "bigots and enthuſiaſts adore them. Every event of life "contributes to their intereſts: they chriſten; they educate; "they marry; they church; they bury; they perſuade; they "frighten; they govern; and ſcarce any thing is done without "them. Notwithſtanding all this, they roar aloud that they "cannot keep their ground," &c. The Independent Whig, vol. i. p. 85.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER I.

Of the conduct of the Clergy and High Churchmen, in oppoſition to the Repeal of the Teſt Laws.

AT four different periods between the revolution and the acceſſion of his preſent Majeſty, the Diſſenters had applied to parliament for the repeal of the Corporation and Teſt Acts.—The princes upon the throne had always favoured their pretenſions; and the miniſters of ſtate, in the two firſt inſtances, exerted the influence of the court in their ſupport; and in the two latter acknowledged their *right*, but lamented that a diſputed throne, and the critical ſituation of public affairs, did not permit them to interfere in their favour. For nearly half a century afterwards the Diſſenters retired from public notice; but at a ſeaſon when peace was within our walls, and proſperity within our cities; when the throne was perfectly eſtabliſhed, and the adminiſtration of public affairs in the hands of a miniſter poſſeſſing the confidence both of king and people, they ventured again to appeal to the juſtice of their country. They had every reaſon to expect a favourable iſſue. The intellect of man had "certainly made rapid improvement" ſince their claim had undergone public diſcuſſion; and, as they

they hoped, had prepared the way for their more liberal treatment. They flattered themſelves that the reigning monarch would *now* be at liberty to give full effect to the wiſhes of his anceſtors, and ſhew favour to a body of loyal ſubjects, to whoſe ſteady attachment his family had been more than once indebted for the crown. And it was not natural to expect that a ſon of the great Earl of Chatham ſhould be the "iſſue of his loins" only, and "not "the child of his principles."

In the beginning, therefore, of the year 1787, the diſſenting laity in London were encouraged to bring their grievances again before parliament. In ſo doing they were impelled by no factious motives, and ſo far from having the remoteſt intention to *diſturb* the ſettled government of the country, they *fully expected* the favourable concurrence of thoſe in power. A deputation of their body waited upon the miniſter, as on former occaſions, to communicate their intention; but they were not received with the ſame cordiality as their anceſtors had been by his predeceſſors in office, for he neither acknowledged their *right* to relief, nor expreſſed his *wiſhes* for their ſucceſs. He only told them "that he could not give an *immediate opinion* "on an affair of ſuch *magnitude.*" His anxiety to form an *unprejudiced* opinion may be proved by the *diſintereſted* perſons he adviſed with, for he conſulted—the *biſhops*. On the 10th of February, his mitred counſellors had a formal meeting, and reſolved (as might reaſonably be expected) that

the claim of the Diſſenters ſhould be oppoſed; and that to prevent invidious reflections on the church, the clergy ſhould not openly take any part, but leave the miniſter to purſue the neceſſary meaſures to defeat the motion, in whatever form it ſhould be made in the houſe of Commons. Theſe orders inſtantly removed the film of ignorance, and worked conviction on the mind of the miniſter as by an immediate revelation from heaven; but he did not condeſcend to give to the Diſſenters, either formally, or through the medium of any friend, the ſmalleſt intimation of his intention to oppoſe them. On the 28th of March the motion was introduced into the Houſe of Commons, and he was then prepared, to the *ſurpriſe* and ſorrow of the Diſſenters, not only to give a decided opinion, but, with the zeal of a proſelyte, to exert the influence of the court to prevent even the appointment of a committee for conſidering their ſituation and grievances.

The biſhops, better acquainted with the character and principles of the miniſter than the Diſſenters, were perfectly at eaſe after they had placed the cauſe of the Church in his hands. We certainly may preſume that there was not at that time the moſt diſtant probability "of the Diſſenters "carrying their point," for the cry of "the dan-"ger of the Church," was not then heard; and the republication of a treatiſe of Biſhop Sherlock againſt the repeal of the Corporation and Teſt Acts, with the addition of a blaſphemous dedication to Mr. Pitt (ſaid to have been written by one ſince rewarded with a mitre), was the *only* attempt at

argument on the part of the eſtabliſhment. Every precaution was ſedulouſly employed by High Churchmen to prevent the public curioſity from being awakened, and a diſcuſſion dangerous to the claims of the Church provoked.

This apparent moderation was the effect of policy, not of principle; for at this criſis the "Review of the Caſe of the Proteſtant Diſſenters" was ready for publication. Hence may the true Whigs of England learn, that the *ſpirit* of the party is the ſame at all times, and that High Churchmen "riſe up rebels" to the cauſe of liberty, even *before* their chieftains think it prudent "to pipe "them to the field."

The cauſe of the Diſſenters in the Houſe of Commons having been defeated, not by reaſon and argument, but a majority of 78 votes, a ſimilar motion was made in the year 1789, which met a ſimilar fate. The conduct of the High Church party was ſtill governed by the ſame prudential motives, and the miniſter again fought their battle; but the majority upon the ſecond motion being reduced from 78 to 20 votes only, the Diſſenters perſevered, and, in the year 1790, declared their intention again to take the ſenſe of a Houſe of Commons, in which the decreaſing majorities of a hoſtile miniſter afforded a good omen of ultimate ſucceſs.

A general election approaching, the miniſter began to be ſeriouſly alarmed, and again called together his ſpiritual guides for advice. In truth, ſome exertion was highly neceſſary; for the eloquence with

with which the cauſe of liberty had been ſupported within doors, and the ability with which it had been enforced by publications without, had reached people of all ranks, and were in danger of carrying conviction into every quarter. In this tremendous ſituation the High Church party was forced to muſter its forces, and begin the attack in form. There was no proſpect of arreſting the progreſs of truth and reaſon, but by alarming the fears, and inflaming the paſſions of the weak and ignorant. For this purpoſe every diſhoneſt artifice was practiſed, and the ingenuity, even of the Clergy, exhauſted, in diſcovering new modes of ſeduction. Prelates, in direct violation of the firſt principles of the conſtitution, and of that decency of conduct, which gives the higheſt luſtre to the dignity of their ſacred function, not only openly interfered in the election of members to ſerve in parliament, but proſtituted their ſpiritual power to influence the votes of their clergy. "The Society for promoting "Chriſtian knowledge" in general *, and ſo not confined to promote the proſperity of any particular ſect, regardleſs of the object of its inſtitution, at a meeting *to which all the members were not ſummoned*, where Biſhop Halifax preſided as chairman, and Biſhop Horſley moved the reſolutions, reſolved that "*the moſt diſtant probability* of the ſucceſs "of the application, would be a cauſe for the "greateſt apprehenſion and alarm." And thus

* This ſociety is, *jointly with the king of Denmark*, engaged in maintaining a miſſion to the Eaſt Indies.

tremblingly

tremblingly alive for the ſecurity of the church, they pathetically " invited and *conjured* their bre-
" thren *in all parts* of the kingdom, as they valued
" the bleſſings, civil and religious, of the Britiſh
" conſtitution, and would tranſmit them entire to
" their poſterity, to co-operate with the members
" of that ſociety with firmneſs and vigour in the
" common cauſe." Theſe reſolutions were diſ-perſed through the kingdom, and this alarm, ex-preſsly founded on no more than a *diſtant* pro-bability, raiſed the cry of the *immediate* danger of the Church, and its bigots triumphed for a moment in the deception. In ſome places the clergy, thus pathetically conjured, met together, and came to public reſolutions againſt the application of the Diſſenters; and a few of the laity, in different parts of the kingdom, followed their example. Some of theſe reſolutions, which will be obſerved upon in the enſuing chapters, breathed a ſpirit equally inimical to civil as religious liberty.

The liberal ſpirit of the times prevented the ma-chinations of theſe clerical politicians from having the wiſhed-for effect. The meetings both of clergy and laity, though dignified by the preſence of officers of his Majeſty's houſehold, were but few in number, and in general thinly attended. Other expedients therefore, leſs honourable, but more likely to be ſucceſsful, were reſorted to. The preſs groaned under the load of publications and republications, filled with the groſſeſt calumny and abuſe; the danger of the Church, and the peril of innovation,

were echoed from the pulpits, and circulated through the kingdom in the government prints; in ſhort, the moſt ſcandalous artifices were employed by clergymen and courtiers to poiſon the minds of our legiſlators. As one inſtance among many, immediately preceding the debate, when no time was left for explanation, printed papers were diſtributed among the members of the Houſe of Commons, purporting that one gentleman (educated in the principles of the Church, but afterwards diſtinguiſhed by his writings againſt the Trinity, and ſo liable to proſecutions both in the eccleſiaſtical and temporal courts) had ſaid, that the Diſſenters, with whom he had then aſſociated himſelf, had further objects in view, and that "*he* did not value the repeal of the Cor- "poration and Teſt acts *the nip of a ſtraw:*" and falſely aſſerting of another gentleman, that he had openly declared, "that their" (the Diſſenter's) "intentions were to remove the liturgy "from the church, and to aboliſh tythes." Theſe trivial circumſtances, both ſuppoſed to have occurred in the ſame county, and at the ſame meeting, were magnified into open declarations of hoſtility from *the whole body* of Proteſtant Diſſenters, and paſſed for "confirmations ſtrong as proofs of holy "writ," that there was a regular plan formed for the reformation of the doctrines of the eſtabliſhment, and the deſtruction of the funds now deſtined for its ſupport. It will be hardly credited that theſe abſurd and improbable charges (which afterwards

terwards turned out to be wholly unfounded in fact) * paſſed current in the Houſe of Commons upon the ſingle unauthenticated teſtimony of a *common weaver*, and occaſioned much angry declamation in the courſe of the debate.

Some paſſages from a work publiſhed by Dr. Prieſtley were alſo infamouſly garbled by the clergy †, and ſo put together as to bear a very different meaning from that which the context gave them. Theſe were ſent to every member immediately previous to the debate, and created a ſtrong prejudice againſt the cauſe of the Diſſenters. Furniſhed with theſe materials, Mr. Burke trembled with apprehenſion leſt the fall of deſpotiſm in France ſhould work the deſtruction of liberty here. Deceived himſelf, and miſleading others, he ſo worked by his ſplendid oratory upon the paſſions of the aſſembly, already inflamed by theſe ſcandalous practices, that in a moment of panic, as ſtrongly impreſſed upon the majority of the Houſe as if an armed enemy had beſet the door, the motion for relief of the Proteſtant Diſſenters was negatived by a great majority. Upon this occaſion the High Church party put forth all its ſtrength, with a view to lay the queſtion at reſt in future ‡. Vain hope! the cauſe of truth and juſtice depends

* See Mr. Cooper's Letter to Mr. Burke, and the Reverend Mr. Toulmin's Letter to Mr. Plumbe.

† The Reverend Spencer Madan, Rector of St. Philip's, in Birmingham, ſpeaks with approbation of theſe ſcandalous extracts. See his Letter to Dr. Prieſtley, p. 12.

‡ See Mr. Burke's ſpeech.

not on a vote of the Houſe of Commons; nor is oppreſſion leſs grievous becauſe the oppreſſor proudly juſtifies the wrong.

By theſe arts victorious, the Church may bluſh for her ſucceſs; by theſe arts repulſed, the Diſſenters feel no humiliation in defeat. They can reflect with an honeſt pride, accompanied with a glow of indignation, on the event of a debate, in which even the eloquence and manly reaſoning of Mr. Fox were unable to reſiſt a ſudden impulſe of prejudice and paſſion. They can look back with gratitude and admiration to the exertions of that great ſtateſman, in whom a life of political warfare has not deadened thoſe benevolent affections of the heart, which beſt adorn and dignify human nature. He forgave his enemies, when under oppreſſion they wanted his aſſiſtance; and in the cauſe of liberty forgot his own wrongs, and ſtood forward the protector and friend of thoſe who had injured him. When, under ſuch auſpices, the Diſſenters ſhall renew their application, and renew it they certainly will, they hope to be indulged with a candid hearing, truſting that neither their general principles, nor the immediate object of their purſuit, will be again ſo ſhamefully miſrepreſented, nor miſrepreſentations to their prejudice ſo incautiouſly believed.

The public attention has been rouſed to the ſituation of Nonconformiſts in this country, and the diſcuſſion of their rights has ſpread far and near a knowledge of the true principles of civil and religious

gious liberty. In this ſituation High Churchmen may think fit to abandon thoſe topics, on which they have hitherto moſt relied. We may hear no more of an *eſſential* or *inſeparable* connection or alliance between the State, and its creature the Church; of the fitneſs of the eccleſiaſtical conſtitution to aſſimilate with the civil, to which its doctrines are directly repugnant; of the moderation of the Church, while its courts are open for the perſecution of ſectaries, and its followers deſtroy their habitations and property without waiting for their ſentence; or of the *complete* toleration of *all* Diſſenters, while diſabilities are the puniſhment of their religious opinions, and many of them may be forced to abjure the realm, or be hanged as felons.

The moderation of the Diſſenters makes a ſtriking contraſt with the furious and intemperate zeal of their adverſaries, and it is to be hoped they will perſevere in the ſame line of conduct. But neither the fate of their laſt application to the Houſe of Commons, nor the deſtruction of their property at Birmingham, can terrify, or ſubdue them into ſilence. To retire from the public eye, and abandon the purſuit of juſtice at this juncture, might be conſtrued into a mean and timid acquieſcence under the calumnies of their enemies, and a ſurrender of thoſe rights which they have taken upon themſelves to vindicate. The Miniſter and his High Church friends have put the matter upon an iſſue that admits of *no compromiſe*; the Diſſenters are now told they have *no right* to what they aſk, and that their principles are hoſtile to the civil conſtitution of their

country. The high ſpirit of independence, which makes them proudly forego the advantages of the eſtabliſhment, will not permit them, like ſpaniels, to fawn and crouch, and lick the hands of thoſe who have thus ill-treated them. The ſame peaceable and quiet, but at the ſame time dignified and ſteady, conduct which has hitherto marked all their proceedings, we doubt not will diſtinguiſh them in future; and they may hope for a happy iſſue in their appeal from a deciſion made under the influence of party and paſſion, to one when reaſon ſhall have reſumed her wonted aſcendancy over the minds of our legiſlators.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER II.

Of the Conduct of High Churchmen, reſpecting the late Riots at Birmingham.

THE ſpirit of bigotry once rouſed is boundleſs in its fury, and the jealouſy of prieſts is ever vigilant and cruel. The exultation of High Churchmen upon their victory in the Houſe of Commons was of ſhort duration. The vigorous efforts of the ſons of freedom in France, and the pleaſure which glowed ſympathetically in the breaſts of Engliſhmen to ſee the bleſſings they enjoyed extended to a large portion of Europe, inſpired new and greater apprehenſions. The French revolution, and the principles of the Britiſh conſtitution, became alike the common topics of abuſe from their pulpits, and the Diſſenters and friends of Gallic liberty were indiſcriminately ſtigmatized as republicans and traitors. The anniverſary of that revolution was intended to be celebrated by convivial meetings in moſt of the principal towns of England, and the High Church party eagerly prepared for that opportunity of taking vengeance on their enemies. They were not ſo ſucceſsful in other places as at Birmingham, whoſe inhabitants, on more than one occaſion before, had approved themſelves the willing inſtruments of outrage, in the hands of jacobites and prieſts,

Warwickſhire had been the favourite diſtrict of Sacheverell, he had been ſupported in both houſes of parliament by its moſt powerful families, and through it he made a triumphal progreſs after his conviction. He continued for many years afterwards to preach ſedition at Sutton, where he was frequently attended by the fanatical inhabitants of Birmingham. He had preached to ſome of them on the Sunday preceding the coronation of George the Firſt, and, as it ſeems, not without effect; for on the day of the coronation, a number of friends to the Hanover ſucceſſion were dining together at a tavern, in order to celebrate the happy event, when their feſtivity was interrupted by a riotous mob, crying out, "Sacheverell for ever, and down with "the Whigs," who broke the windows of the houſe where they were aſſembled, and obliged them to diſperſe. *Then* it was a crime at Birmingham to exult in the ſecurity of Britiſh liberty; *now* it is a crime to rejoice at the downfal of deſpotiſm in France!

A few months afterwards, the inhabitants of Birmingham had a further opportunity of manifeſting their hoſtility to our preſent happy conſtitution, and their diſloyalty to their ſovereign. A mob from Wolverhampton and the neighbourhood had committed great outrages in the county of Stafford, and demoliſhed ſeveral Preſbyterian meeting-houſes. The riots had proceeded to ſuch a height, as to engage the attention of parliament, and a Mr. Bayly, being examined before the Houſe of Commons, gave the following account:

"That

" That there are three Preſbyterian meeting-
" houſes, not very remote from each other, at Dud-
" ley, Bromwich, and Oldbury, and the proprie-
" tors of them obſerving, that the ſeveral meeting-
" houſes in thoſe parts had been pulled down by the
" mob, they adviſed with lawyers about the law-
" fulneſs of defending themſelves, and then took
" a reſolution to do it, and aſſiſt each other. They
" procured a warrant from Sir Henry Gough, to
" the conſtable of Bromwich, to keep ſufficient
" watch, and when the mob came thither, they
" were beaten off with handwhips and cudgels,
" under the ſmart of which they fell on their knees,
" aſked pardon, *and prayed for King George*; but
" the next day they came in greater numbers,
" with ſcythes, reaping-hooks ſet in proper handles,
" about two yards long, large clubs, and ſome fire-
" arms; but as ſoon as they came up to the guard,
" their courage failed them, they flung down their
" arms, (many of which were picked up) and
" ſcampered. Thirty-ſix of them were taken, and
" placed in an inn, that they might be carried be-
" fore a juſtice of peace the next day; *but at twelve*
" *o'clock at night there came a mob from Birmingham,*
" *intending to releaſe them; they fired upon the guard,*
" *attacked the houſe, and broke it, but the guard beat*
" *them off, and took ſeveral priſoners, whom Sir*
" *Henry Gough ſent to Stafford jail.* The rabble, ſtill
" outrageous, came the next day, and fired upon
" the guard, who being by that time furniſhed alſo
" with fire-arms, the mob fled at the firſt fire. A
" gentleman had his horſe ſhot under him, and

" another

" another was mortally wounded. Some of the " guards were wounded. They took ſeveral priſo- " ners, amongſt which are the *two captains, one of* " *them the public cryer of Wolverhampton*; ſome of " the priſoners were found to be Papiſts. Being " aſked at their examination who ſet them to work, " two of them ſaid, they were told that two gen- " tlemen of note, Mr. Vernon and Mr. Lane, " would give ſixty guineas a-piece, and the latter " be their leader. When the rabble pulled down " the meeting-houſe at Wolverhampton, one of " their leaders getting on the top of it, flouriſhed " his hat round his head, and cried, '*G—d d—n* " *K— G—ge and the Duke of Marlborough.*' A " fellow at the ſame place, ſtanding by as a ſpectator " only, was charged by the rebels with being a ſpy, " and, to atone for his ſuppoſed offence, they made " him go down on his knees, and cry, '*God bleſs* " *King James the Third*' *." The Houſe of Commons, after this evidence was given at the bar, and a letter, containing a further account of theſe tumults, had been read by Mr. Bracebridge, a member, reſolved unanimouſly, that an addreſs ſhould be preſented to his Majeſty, for the inſertion of which, and the following intereſting papers concerning the riots in Staffordſhire, I hope my readers will think no apology requiſite.

" Moſt Gracious Sovereign,

" We, your Majeſty's moſt dutiful and loyal " ſubjects, the Commons in Parliament aſſembled,

* Oldmixon's Hiſt. of England.

" being

" being highly concerned at *the continued endeavours*
" *of the enemies of your perſon and government* to
" diſturb the tranquillity and happineſs of your
" kingdoms, and to deprive your people of the
" great bleſſings they enjoy under your auſpicious
" reign; and it having appeared to us, that, by the
" encouragement, and *the falſe and traiterous inſi-*
" *nuations of perſons diſaffected to your title and govern-*
" *ment*, great numbers of your poor deluded ſub-
" jects have been prevailed upon, in many parts
" of the kingdom, *to aſſemble together, and, in a*
" *tumultuous and rebellious manner, to commit great*
" *diſorders, and do great injuries to others of their*
" *fellow-ſubjects and fellow-proteſtants*, we think it
" our indiſpenſible duty, on this occaſion, to expreſs
" our utmoſt abhorrence of all ſuch traitorous pro-
" ceedings, and our higheſt reſentment againſt the
" authors and promoters of them; and to renew
" to your Majeſty the hearty and vigorous reſo-
" lutions of your faithful Commons to ſupport
" your Majeſty and your government againſt all
" your open and ſecret enemies, and to contribute
" the utmoſt in our power to the honour and ſafety
" of your ſacred perſon, and the quiet and ſecurity
" of your government: and to that end, we crave
" leave moſt humbly to beſeech your Majeſty,
" that you will be graciouſly pleaſed to *give direc-*
" *tions to the ſeveral magiſtrates throughout your king-*
" *dom, that the laws now in force may be put in a*
" *ſpeedy, and in the moſt vigorous, execution, againſt*
" *all ſuch perſons as ſhall be any way concerned in the*
" *rebellious and tumultuous riots and diſorders which*

" *have*

" *have been committed, and are now carrying on, by*
" *perſons diſaffected to your Majeſty, and your govern-*
" *ment, and that a ſtrict enquiry may be made to diſ-*
" *cover the authors and promoters of them, ſo as they*
" *may be brought to condign puniſhment.*

" And *it being apparent, that the neglect or miſ-*
" *behaviour of many juſtices of peace, and other ma-*
" *giſtrates, have given great encouragement to the ſaid*
" *diſorders, we crave leave, in all humility, to be-*
" *ſeech your Majeſty, that an account may be taken of*
" *ſuch juſtices of the peace as have failed in the diſ-*
" *charge of their duty on theſe occaſions; and that*
" *ſuch of them as ſhall appear to your Majeſty to have*
" *neglected their duty, may be forthwith put out of the*
" *commiſſions of the peace, and that ſuch other magiſ-*
" *trates, as ſhall likewiſe appear to your Majeſty to*
" *have neglected their duty therein, may be proceeded*
" *againſt with the utmoſt rigour of the law.*

" And, as your loyal Commons are fully aſſured,
" that by the wiſdom and ſteadineſs of your admi-
" niſtration, the ſceptre in your royal hand will ſoon
" become a terror to all thoſe, who by open or ſecret
" practices ſhall any way abet the enemies of your
" perſon or government; ſo, from our moſt dutiful
" regard to your Majeſty, and in *juſtice to thoſe of*
" *your ſubjects, who for their zeal and firm adherence*
" *to your Majeſty and your government have been*
" *ſufferers* in the ſaid tumultuous and traitorous
" diſorders, we do moſt humbly beſeech your
" Majeſty, that you will be moſt graciouſly pleaſ-
" ed to give directions, *that an exact account may*
" *be taken of the loſſes and damages which any of*

" *your*

" *your ſubjects have ſuſtained by reaſon of the ſaid* " *tumultuous and rebellious proceedings, and that the* " *ſufferers may have full compenſation made them for* " *their damages*; your faithful Commons moſt " humbly aſſuring your Majeſty, that all expences " which ſhall be incurred on that account ſhall " be made good to your Majeſty out of the next " aids that ſhall be afterwards granted by parlia- " ment.

" And for the ſecurity of your ſacred perſon, " and the quieting the minds of your faithful ſub- " jects, we do further moſt humbly adviſe your " Majeſty, that you will be graciouſly pleaſed to " give orders that the magiſtrates throughout the " kingdom, in their ſeveral ſtations, do ſpeedily " and effectually put the laws in execution againſt " the papiſt and non-jurors *."

The addreſs was preſented on the 19th of July, and in his anſwer the King ſaid: " *I will give* " *immediate directions for putting in execution the* " *ſeveral matters which you ſo juſtly recommend to* " *me* †."

On the 16th of Auguſt, 1715, an addreſs was preſented to his Majeſty by Mr. Nathaniel Hodges, and the Proteſtant diſſenting Miniſters *of all the denominations*, introduced by his Grace the Duke of Newcaſtle, wherein they ſay,

" We, your Majeſty's moſt loyal ſubjects, think " ourſelves obliged in duty and gratitude humbly

* Commons Journal, vol. xviii. p. 229.

† Ibid. p. 231.

" to

" to acknowledge *that ſeaſonable protection which* " *your Majeſty has been pleaſed to give to thoſe of* " *our perſuaſion, from the late rebellious tumults,* and " for *the gracious anſwer to the addreſs of your* " *faithful Commons, wherein they deſire, that a full* " *compenſation be made to thoſe whoſe ſufferings they* " *ſo juſtly impute to their zeal and firm adherence to* " *your Majeſty and your government.*

" We can aſſure your Majeſty, that no juſt " occaſion has been given by us to our fellow-ſub- " jects for any ſuch treatment; nor can the prin- " ciples which oblige us to diſſent from the Church " of England be a reaſonable provocation to any " who have the leaſt regard to the common rights " of mankind, or the rules of the Chriſtian re- " ligion.

" We deſire nothing more than to enjoy our " civil rights, with a full liberty to profeſs our " own religious ſentiments, which we take to be a " privilege due to all men. *We have been always* " *ready to aſſiſt the Church of England in defence of* " *the Proteſtant religion, when in real and imminent* " *danger,* being agreed with them and all Proteſ- " tant churches in thoſe principles that began the " reformation, and which alone can juſtify and " ſupport it.

" When there has been a deſign to introduce " popery and arbitrary power, the Proteſtant Diſ- " ſenters have generally been firſt attacked, nor " know we any other reaſon why we have now " ſuffered the outrage of papiſts, non-jurors, and " other diſaffected perſons, but that *they were*

" *ſure*

" *ſure we were a body of men fixed in our duty to* " *your Majeſty, and lay moſt expoſed to popular in-* " *ſults*, againſt which your Majeſty and your two " Houſes of Parliament, in your great wiſdom and " goodneſs, has given us a ſeaſonable, and we " hope effectual, ſecurity, for time to come, &c."

His Majeſty's moſt gracious anſwer.

" *I am very much concerned at the unchriſtian and* " *barbarous treatment, which thoſe of your perſua-* " *ſion have met with in ſeveral parts of my kingdom,* " *and care ſhall be taken that a full compenſation* " *be made to them for their ſufferings.* I thank you " for this dutiful and loyal addreſs, and *you may* " *be aſſured of my protection.*"

A ſhort time afterwards, (4th March, 1717) Dr. Calamy, introduced by Mr. Secretary Stanhope, preſented to his Majeſty another addreſs of the diſſenting Miniſters, in which was this paſſage. " We " think it the particular honour of the Proteſtant " Diſſenters, that *their ſtrict adherence to the intereſt* " *of your illuſtrious family, before your Majeſty's ac-* " *ceſſion, and their loyalty to it ſince, have drawn upon* " *them ſo much of the fury of their fellow ſubjects*; we " are not conſcious what elſe could render us ob- " noxious to them. Our principles being, as we " hope, the moſt friendly to mankind, and amount- " ing to no more than thoſe of *a general toleration to* " *all peaceable ſubjects, univerſal love and charity for all* " *Chriſtians, and to act always in matters of religion as* " *God ſhall give us light into his will about them.*

" We do not ſo much as expect or deſire any " thing that ought to give any one the leaſt diſ- " turbance, *we only wiſh, that under your Majeſty,*

" *as*

" *as the common father of all your loyal people, thoſe*
" *of our perſuaſion might not want capacity,* as we
" hope your Majeſty will find they never want an
" inclination, *to promote the true intereſt of the Pro-*
" *teſtant religion, and of their country.*"

That inclination was not wanting in the Diſſenters of Birmingham, in the year 1745. While High Churchmen were foſtering a rebellion againſt their ſovereign, and plotting the deſtruction of their country, theſe Diſſenters were embodied in defence of both. They formed themſelves into a volunteer company, and were daily exerciſed to the uſe of arms. Their example repreſſed the diſaffected, and contributed much towards preventing this part of the kingdom from riſing in favour of the Pretender.

When the High Church party had reſolved to take into their own hands the late oppoſition to the repeal of the Teſt laws, the county of Warwick was found to retain its ancient principles and ſpirit. The clergy of Birmingham prevailed, without difficulty, upon the deſcendants of thoſe who had foſtered the doctrines, and complimented the perſon, of Sacheverell, to give their ſignatures for calling a meeting of the freeholders of that county. The earl of Aylesford, captain of the yeomen of his Majeſty's guard, preſided at the meeting, and dignified with his name a ſtring of reſolutions, in which the clergy had artfully concealed, in language of much apparent moderation, the moſt intolerant and arbitrary principles.

The town of Birmingham itſelf, probably owing to its ancient connection with Sacheverell, had long been diſtinguiſhed for the narrow ſpirit of its prieſts,

and

and the religious bigotry of its inhabitants. When Dr. Prieſtley accepted the paſtoral charge in a congregation of Proteſtant Diſſenters there, and came to reſide in its neighbourhood, he attempted to bring the Churchmen to a better temper towards the Diſſenters, but in vain. Some advances made by the Diſſenters towards conciliation had no effect; and Dr. Prieſtley could procure no return of liberality, either to himſelf or others. He was perſonally obnoxious to High Churchmen in general, but particularly to the Clergy of that claſs, from the attacks he had repeatedly made upon the generally received doctrine of the Trinity, and from his maintaining the impolicy and injuſtice of eſtabliſhing any ſyſtem of religion. His heterodoxy upon theſe points was conſtrued into a declaration of hoſtility againſt the *political* conſtitution of his country, and he was charged with deſigning to raiſe a rebellion among the mechanics of Birmingham, in ſupport of them. Theſe calumnies had the ſanction of Dr. Horſley, then Archdeacon of St. Albans, by whom he was held up to the public as a criminal, living deſervedly under the conſtant ſuſpicion and connivance of the magiſtrate. The following paſſage is extracted from Dr. Horſley's "Tracts in controverſy with Dr. Prieſtley," republiſhed ſince he became a biſhop. Its curioſity and importance induce me to give it at length.

"He" (i. e. Dr. Prieſtley) "ſhews with great "ability, that all meaſures of government to ſupport "the eccleſiaſtical conſtitution will be of no avail, *if* "*once a great majority of the people can be made its*

" *enemies*—and for this good purpoſe he declaims in
" his *conventicle*, to ' enlighten the minds and excite
" the zeal ' of the mechanics of the populous town
" of Birmingham, with reſpect to the doctrines in
" diſpute between himſelf and the aſſertors of that
" faith which the Church of England holds in com-
" mon with the firſt Chriſtians. The avowal of
" theſe ſentiments in himſelf, of *hoſtility to the po-*
" *litical conſtitution* of his country; the attempt
" to excite ſimilar ſentiments in the breaſts of the
" ' commoneſt people,' in whoſe breaſts they cannot
" be expected to lie inactive, quietly expecting the
" event of literary diſcuſſion, ſuch avowal and
" *ſuch attempts are more, I ſhould think, than can be*
" *juſtified by the rights of private judgment upon ſpecu-*
" *lative queſtions*; *not that I would inſinuate that they*
" *in any degree deſerve the attention of our governors*;
" for I am well perſuaded that neither his doctrine
" nor his principles are gaining that ground among
" the people which he ſeems to imagine. I am in-
" clined, indeed, to think, that the advancement
" even of his unitarian doctrine is but ſlow, except
" in his own head, in which it ſeems to be making
" haſty ſtrides. *In his good wiſhes to the conſtitution,*
" I think better of many of his unitarian friends,
" than to believe they concur with him; and while
" trade and manufactures flouriſh at Birmingham,
" we may ſafely truſt to the inducements which
" every man there will find, to mind his own buſi-
" neſs, to defeat the ſucceſs of Dr. Prieſtley's en-
" deavours to ' enlighten and excite.' It ſeems
" therefore *unneceſſary at preſent* to think of ' raiſing
" the dam, or of making it ſtronger.' It will be the

" better

" better policy of government to let the brawling
" torrent paſs. The attempt to provoke ſeverities
" by audacious language, in order to raiſe a cry of
" perſecution, if ſedition, making religion its pre-
" tence, ſhould meet with a premature check from
" the ſecular power, is a ſtale trick, by which the
" world is grown too wiſe to be taken in. *If Dr.*
" *Prieſtley ever ſhould attempt to execute the ſmalleſt*
" *part of what he would now be underſtood to threa-*
" *ten*, it may then indeed be expedient that the
" magiſtrate ſhould ſhew, that he beareth not the
" ſword in vain. But *whatever Dr. Prieſtley may*
" *affect to think of the intolerance of Churchmen in*
" *general, and of the Archdeacon of St. Alban's in*
" *particular, a Churchman lives not in the preſent*
" *age ſo weak, who would not in policy, if not in*
" *love, diſcourage, rather than promote, any thing*
" *that might be called a perſecution of the unitarian*
" *blaſphemy, in the perſon of Dr. Prieſtley, or any*
" *of his admirers.* A Churchman lives not, ſo
" weak as not to know, that perſecution is the hot-
" bed in which nonſenſe and impiety have ever
" thrived; it is ſo friendly to the growth of religion,
" that it nouriſhes even the noxious weeds, which
" carry but a reſemblance of the true plant in
" the external form. Let us truſt, therefore, *for the*
" *preſent*, as we ſecurely may, to the trade of the
" good town of Birmingham, *and to the wiſe con-*
" *nivance of the magiſtrate, (who watches, no doubt,*
" *while he deems it politic to wink) to nip Dr. Prieſt-*
" *ley's goodly projects in the bud*, which nothing
" would be ſo likely to ripen to a dangerous
" effect, as conſtraint *exceſſively or unſeaſonably* uſed.

" *Thanks however are due to him from all lovers of*
" *their country, for the miſchief which he wants not*
" *the inclination to do, if he could find the means of*
" *doing it.* In gratitude's eſtimation the will is ever
" to be taken for the deed *."

It ſeems the Biſhop did not know the ſpirit of his friends. Churchmen have belied the Biſhop's prediction; they have been weak enough to prepare the hotbed of perſecution, and Dr. Prieſtley's plants may now be expected to advance with luxuriant growth.

While the repeal of the Teſt Laws was in agitation, Birmingham became the ſeat of local diſputation, and Dr. Prieſtley was attacked with fury both in ſermons and pamphlets. Having been marked out by biſhops as the worſt of criminals, and the moſt deſperate of ſinners, it was not to be expected that he would be treated with much ceremony by the inferior clergy. Accordingly he was charged with attacking the baſis of moral obligation, and with forming deſigns to overturn by violence the conſtitution of his country; to believe his clerical adverſaries, he was not only a blaſphemer of his God, but a traitor to his king. By ſuch miſrepreſentations, the firſt philoſopher of the age, upon whoſe moral character his moſt virulent enemies could not fix a ſtain, and whom any country in Europe would be proud to call her own, could not walk the ſtreets without danger of perſonal inſult. The calumnies of the clergy were extended to the Diſſenters in general, and the groſſeſt falſe-

* Biſhop Horſley's Tracts, p. 404, &c.

hoods

hoods and misrepresentations circulated to render their whole body suspected and odious. Their loyalty was disputed, and Mr. Madan, in a sermon preached in the parish church of St. Philip's, asserted boldly, and falsely too, if history is to be credited, "that the *Presbyterian* principles are unquestionably *republican**." He afterwards explained the word "Presbyterian" to be here used as a general term opposed to the members of the Church of England; but his hearers, it will appear presently, took it in its literal signification. The lower classes of the people, by these unworthy arts, were worked up to a high pitch of fury, and hearing that some of their superiors indulged themselves in the prac-

* In the debate for uniting his Majesty's subjects in 1667, Sir Robert Cotton conceiving, as it may be presumed Mr. Madan does now, that kingly governments have a divine origin, said, "The Presbyterian tenets are most destructive to our go-"vernment"—'that the king is but *minister bonorum*'—'he "is greater than any one man, but less than the people'—"'*salus populi suprema lex*,' and many others.''—Grey's Debates, vol. i. p. 113. Mr. Madan would be puzzled to shew how *these* principles differ from those on which the revolution must be defended.

The apostle "Paul had opened some men's eyes, and the "loaves began to come in but slowly. This enraged the *crafts-*"*men*, and they enraged the people. The priests lost custo-"mers, and the people lost their senses. Such is the power of "delusion over dark and slavish minds! *Let but the priest point* "*at a windmill, and cry the Church is falling, his congregation* "*will venture their brains to stop the sails.* What a rare "army does zeal raise, when religion and reason do not spoil "the muster, or stop the march."—The Craftsmen, a Sermon, or Paraphrase upon several verses of the nineteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, first published in the Independent Whig, and republished in 1791, p. 26.

tice of drinking "Damnation to the Preſbyterians," were prepared to commit every ſpecies of violence and outrage againſt them.

Notice was given by public advertiſement, that on Thurſday, the 14th of July, there would be a dinner at the hotel, to celebrate the anniverſary of the French revolution. The invitation was addreſſed equally to Churchmen and Diſſenters, and contained nothing that could reaſonably offend either; but the High Church party did not fail to uſe this meeting as a pretext for inflaming the paſſions of the people more highly againſt the Diſſenters. The moſt abſurd and ridiculous reports were not only circulated, but believed; and the High Church partizans endeavoured to delude the people into a firm perſuaſion, that the Diſſenters had formed a regular plan for *riſing in rebellion* againſt their ſovereign, *and pulling down the churches*, on an appointed day.

On the Monday preceding the 14th of July, ſome copies of a printed hand-bill, of an inflammatory nature, inviting every enemy to civil and religious deſpotiſm, "to give his ſanction to the "majeſtic common cauſe," by a public celebration of the anniverſary, were found on the table of a coffee-houſe. This handbill has been ſuppoſed by ſome to have been the production of the High Church party, and to have been placed there on purpoſe to make the ſtorm fall more heavy on the Diſſenters. It certainly contained ſentiments of diſloyalty

diſloyalty which do not belong to them; and as ſeveral letters in the ſame ſtrain were afterwards *forged* by High Churchmen, in order to enrage the mob, ſuſpicions have been entertained, not without reaſon, that this was fabricated by the ſame perſons. The circulation of this paper in the town of Birmingham, by whomſoever fabricated, was at firſt bounded by the walls of the coffee-houſe, and the number of copies left there did not exceed half a dozen in number. The terms in which it was couched, though utterly indefenſible, were not more likely, either from the matter or the compoſition, to excite a breach of the peace, or endanger the government, than publications which daily ſwarm from the preſs with impunity. But in that ferment of party, the magiſtrates thought it neceſſary to be vigilant and active, and immediately tranſmitted one of theſe handbills to the office of the Secretary of State.

The meaſures taken by the magiſtrates for the ſuppreſſion of theſe papers naturally made them the general ſubject of converſation, and occaſioned manuſcript copies to be taken, and circulated into many hands. As the day approached, no artifices were ſpared to work upon the paſſions of the lower claſſes of people, and additional calumnies were invented and ſpread abroad. In vain did the gentlemen, who had propoſed the commemoration, declare, by advertiſement in the Birmingham Chronicle, their entire diſapprobation of the obnoxious handbill, and their ignorance of the author. In vain did they "aver, in the moſt explicit manner,

" their firm attachment to the conſtitution of their " own country, as veſted in the three eſtates of " *King*, Lords, and Commons." The principles of the Diſſenters continued ſtill to be wilfully miſrepreſented, and no doubt was entertained among the bigotted ſons of the Church, that the object of the meeting (at which Churchmen as well as Diſſenters were to aſſemble) was to carry into execution a plot againſt the civil conſtitution and eſtabliſhed religion of their country.

The morning of the 14th was uſhered in by an advertiſement from the magiſtrates (dated the day before) offering a reward of one hundred guineas for diſcovery of the writer, printer, publiſher, or diſtributor of the beforementioned handbill. Why this advertiſement was delayed from Monday till Thurſday does not appear; but the publication of it *on that morning* had, I will in charity hope, an *unexpected*, but certainly a *moſt powerful* effect on the minds of the populace; it added the *ſtimulus* of terror to religious zeal, and gave, as they were wickedly taught to believe, the ſanction of authority to their ſuſpicions. The friends to the commemoration, ſenſible of the pains that had been taken to provoke a riot, agreed among themſelves, for preſervation of the public peace, to give up their deſign; the dinner was accordingly countermanded, and a handbill drawn up, and ſent to the printer. Upon further conſideration, it was determined that the handbill ſhould be ſuppreſſed, and the dinner take place; but that to avoid all pretence of provocation on their part, the company ſhould break up at an early hour.

The

The rabble before the door of the hotel inſulted ſome of the gentlemen going in, and ſhewed a diſpoſition to begin a riot; but their numbers were not ſufficient to create alarm. About three o'clock, eighty-one gentlemen (Churchmen and Diſſenters) ſat down to dinner. A member of the eſtabliſhment preſided at the meeting. Every thing *within doors* paſſed off with the utmoſt harmony, and between five and ſix o'clock they broke up. The toaſts are before the public, and bear no particular reference to the Proteſtant Diſſenters, but to the cauſe of liberty in general; and Mr. Ruſſell, who was preſent, in his letter of the 20th July, 1791, ſays, "Nor was a ſingle ſentiment uttered, or I believe "conceived, that would hurt the feelings of any "one friend to liberty and good government, under "*the happy conſtitution we are bleſſed with in this* "*kingdom.*" The company, thus diſperſed, congratulated themſelves, in a momentary deluſion, that the day would conclude in tranquillity. But a few hours introduced a different ſcene, and proved that they were as little acquainted with the ſavage temper of religious bigots, when they ſuppoſed they could relent, and recede from a deſign to perſecute; as thoſe bigots were acquainted with the firm and reſolute ſpirit of the Diſſenters, when they could hope to ſubdue it by violence.

On the 14th of July, the High Church party met in great numbers at ſeveral of the taverns and public-houſes, not to celebrate the French revolution, but to drink "Damnation to the Preſbyterians." The early breaking up of the gentlemen, who had met in honour of the French revolution, ſeems

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at firſt to have diſconcerted the High Church plan for beginning a riot; for at their departure from the hotel there was no appearance of tumult. But about eight o'clock, a band of ruffians, inflamed with liquor and religious zeal, appeared before the hotel. They broke the windows, and with difficulty were convinced that the company had retired. Their behaviour at the outſet plainly ſhewed, that the celebration of the anniverſary had been artfully made a cloak for ſetting on foot a cruſade againſt the Diſſenters; for not one hoſtile voice againſt the French revolution was heard, while from all ſides were echoed, "Church and "King for ever; Down with the Preſbyterians," &c. and from ſome perſons, "Damn Dr. Prieſt-"ley." Diſappointed in their deſign to commit perſonal violence, and add to the catalogue of martyrs, the deluded multitude, taught by their paſtors that the *Preſbyterians* were republicans, and traitors to their King, ruſhed tumultuouſly to the new Meeting-houſe, additionally obnoxious becauſe Dr. Prieſtley preached there, and ſet it on fire; they then proceeded to the old Meeting-houſe, which they levelled with the ground.

While thus meritoriouſly diſplaying their loyalty and religion, they declared their intention to proceed next to Dr. Prieſtley's houſe at Fairhill* (about two

* "From this you may learn, my friends, that one man "with truth on his ſide is enough to frighten a whole army, "yea, a whole hierarchy of *craftſmen*, and to defeat them, if he "has but a fair hearing. You ſee alſo the graceleſs methods "that red hot high prieſts take to confute ſuch a man: firſt, "*they dreſs him up as an atheiſt*, and an enemy to the Church, "*and then ſet the mob upon him*; for the law was not againſt Paul, "as

two miles from the town). Notice was immediately conveyed to him of the humane deſign of theſe reformers, and he provided for his ſafety by flight. He had not dined at the hotel, and nothing could be more unexpected than this intelligence. The mob kept their word, and remained during the whole night at Fairhill, drinking his liquors, deſtroying, and at laſt burning to the ground, his houſe and laboratory. In the flames which here gratified the bigotry of High Churchmen, were conſumed the moſt valuable apparatus for philoſophical experiments that any private individual was ever poſſeſſed of, many manuſcripts intended for publication, and a library of valuable books, the produce of many years ſelection. Not yet ſatiated with miſchief, theſe ſavages returned from Dr. Prieſtley's, crying through the ſtreets "Church "and King;" and the inhabitants were obliged to chalk thoſe words on the fronts and doors of their houſes, to protect them. The mob continued their depredations on the houſes and property of

" as we ſhall ſee preſently, and yet *they meant to deſtroy Paul* " *againſt law.* An implacable tribe! no power can ſatisfy " them, that has either mercy in it, or bounds to it; craft is " their calling, and lies and violence the tools of their trade."

" Behold here the different behaviour of truth and falſehood! " or, in other words, of Paul and the craftſmen! When men " contend for truth they do it calmly, becauſe they are ſure that it " will ſupport itſelf; but error, conſcious of its weak foundation, " flies inſtantly for ſupport to rage and oppreſſion. Paul reaſons " peaceably and powerfully: Demetrius deceives, ſcolds, and " *raiſes a mob: but I defy the craftſmen to ſhew me one mob of* " *Paul's raiſing in all the New Teſtament.*" The Craftſmen, p. 29, 28.

Diſſenters

Diſſenters (chiefly Preſbyterians*), for the remainder of Friday, the whole of Saturday, and until late on Sunday evening when a detachment of the 15th regiment of dragoons arrived from Nottingham after a forced march of no leſs than fifty-ſix miles in one day.

It certainly is extraordinary, that in the heart of this country, boaſting of its civilization and good government, ſuch diſgraceful outrages ſhould have been permitted, without interruption from the civil power, for three nights and three days together. To ſuppoſe that the perſons and property of Diſſenters are not equally under the protection of the civil magiſtrate, with thoſe of the members of the eſtabliſhed Church, would be a libel upon our laws; to ſuppoſe that the executive power is in general not ſufficiently ſtrong to afford that protection, would be a libel on the government itſelf. By ſome ſtrange occurrence of circumſtances, however, the executive power appeared inſufficient for a time to check this paroxyſm of intemperate zeal. High Churchmen, indeed, could never have choſen a more favourable moment. The attention of the King's Miniſters had been occupied with providing for the ſafety of the metropolis, where a ſimilar meeting had been advertiſed. And, while troops were marching there from all parts, Birmingham was

* A Preſbyterian Meeting-houſe, ſituate at Kingſwood, which was now deſtroyed, had been demoliſhed by a High Church mob in the tumults of 1715; and from the name of a poor wretch executed for being concerned in pulling it down, had been ever afterwards known by the name of *Dallix*'s chapel.

left

left without any military protection. The watchful care of the magiſtrates, in ſending to the Secretary of State a copy of the inflammatory hand-bill on the Monday preceding, and the alarming account of the ferment of the public mind which muſt have accompanied it, occaſioned no alteration, and troops were not poſted nearer than at fifty-ſix miles diſtance. To obtain their aid in caſe of emergency too, a previous application was requiſite to the Secretary at War, and thus nearly three days time muſt be loſt, *even after the rioters had proceeded to ſuch lengths as to render the interference of the military neceſſary.*

The magiſtrates dined cloſe to the hotel, and remained in Birmingham till a late hour in the evening; they muſt therefore have had early intelligence of the commencement of the riots; but it does not appear that they ever read the proclamation in the Riot Act, or, till a very late period, ſent for troops to diſperſe them*. Such was the general deluſion of the rioters, that they were often heard to ſay, they acted under the protection of the magiſtrates; and before the ſoldiers arrived, they ſpoke with confidence of their being ſent by government to aſſiſt in the work of devaſtation. How deſerving of pity the infatuation of theſe poor wretches, who had been taught that they could beſt teſtify their attachment to their Sove-

* The troops are ſuppoſed to have arrived at laſt in conſequence of the letter of a private individual, written to Lord Hawkeſbury *on Friday.* When the magiſtrates ſent to the Secretary of State is not known.

reign

reign by breaking his laws, and their reverence for their God by perſecuting his creatures.

Some have not ſcrupled to aſſert, that the outrages of theſe banditti were the reſult of a plan regularly arranged and ſettled before the 14th of July, and that there were perſons ſent down from London to direct its execution. This is certain, that there were among the rioters ſome, who appeared to be ſtrangers in Birmingham, to whoſe orders the utmoſt deference was paid; and that they proceeded to the deſtruction of the houſes in regular ſucceſſion, according to a written liſt, in which was noted the order in which each was to be attacked. The number of houſes in this proſcription roll was continually increaſing, ſo that at laſt it was ſaid they amounted to more than ſeventy. Their ravages were conducted with ſo much circumſpection, that there was a great appearance of method in their madneſs, and in particular they were careful not to make uſe of fire where any buildings adjoining to thoſe they were about to deſtroy might be endangered.

That the Diſſenters, and not the friends of the French revolution, were the objects of their fury, is manifeſt from this circumſtance, among others, that the chairman of the meeting, who was a Churchman, eſcaped without injury; while the houſes of Mr. Taylor and Mr. Ryland, who were abſent, and known not to approve of it, were burnt to the ground—but they were Diſſenters,

and High Churchmen can feel *envy* as well as "hatred, and all uncharitableneſs."

Several incidents unfortunately occurred to give confidence to the rioters. On the Saturday, after they had for nearly three days triumphed in their exceſſes, Mr. Brooke, a deputy ſheriff for the county of Warwick, publiſhed the following animated, pathetic, and liberal handbill.

Temple Row, Birmingham, Saturday, July 16th, 1791.

Whereas ſome deteſtable villains, from the moſt wicked motives, to injure Mr. Wm. Windsor, a tenant of Mr. Brooke's, at *Aſhſted*, have circulated a report that Mr. Windsor's buildings *at Aſhſted* belong to the *corporation of Coventry*. As ſuch report is evidently intended to incenſe the *friends* of Church and King to *deſtroy* the property of the ſaid Wm. Windsor, Mr. Brooke, whoſe moſt hearty attachment is *well known* to the *real friends* of Church and King, begs leave to addreſs them with the moſt ſolemn *aſſurance*, upon the *word* and *honour* of a Church and King's man, that the *corporation of Coventry*, nor any *Preſbyterian*, have any concern or intereſt whatever in the *buildings* and property of the ſaid Wm. Windsor, at *Aſhſted*, nor in any of the *buildings* belonging to Mr. Brooke, or any other perſon, at *Aſhſted*; and that upon all elections for the city of Coventry, where the ſaid Wm. Windsor lived before he came to *Aſhſted*, he uniformly voted *againſt* the *corporation* and *preſbyterian intereſt*, and always ſupported the real true blue, which is the Church and King party.

Mr.

Mr. Brooke, therefore, is convinced that this ADDRESS will be attended to by the GENTLEMEN in the CHURCH and KING party, and hereby offers a reward of Ten Guineas for the detection of the *raſcals* who gave riſe to ſo falſe a report.

Church and King for ever.

Proud of the honour of being addreſſed at ſuch a juncture as " friends of Church and King," and " GENTLEMEN of the Church and King party; and flattered with Mr. Brooke's declaring himſelf " alſo a Church and King's man," they ſpared Mr. Windſor's property—But did ſuch attempt to conciliate a gang of thieves and houſe-burners, tend to the reſtoration of the public tranquillity, or the ſafety of individuals?

On the following day, another extraordinary hand-bill appeared, which, however well deſigned, certainly tended rather to incite than abate the evil ſpirit then working. No leſs than ſixteen gentlemen, headed by the Earl of Aylesford, including thoſe magiſtrates whoſe immediate duty it was to quell theſe tumults, and thoſe clergymen whoſe miniſtrations ought to have inſpired a more chriſtian temper in the authors of them, addreſſed theſe rebels againſt the government of their country, by the tender appellation of " Friends and *Fellow Church-* " *men.*" Inſtead of raiſing the *poſſe comitatus*, and ſeizing theſe offenders; inſtead of cruſhing them by an armed force in caſe of reſiſtance; inſtead of reading the proclamation in the Riot Act, and putting them out of the protection of the law; nay,

without

without even reprobating their paſt miſconduct, or threatening them with the puniſhment due for the crimes they had already committed, they were *informed* that the damage done would fall upon the county at large, and conjured to deſiſt from " the " deſtruction of *any more* houſes," on account of the conſequent addition of taxes, which they, " and the reſt of the friends of the Church," would feel a very grievous burden! If a ſimilar addreſs, not to " the *gentlemen* of the Church and King " party," but to any other *gentlemen* thieves or felons had been propoſed, is it probable that the ſignature of an earl, and a knight of the ſhire, of juſtices of the peace and clergymen, would have been obtained?

During the melancholy ſcenes exhibited in the ſucceſſive conflagration and deſtruction of houſes, High Churchmen were guilty of the moſt nefarious practices to ſtimulate the mob to further acts of miſchief. Letters were forged, charging the Diſſenters with a treaſonable deſign to overthrow the preſent happy conſtitution of this kingdom, and pretending that the whole body of them were combined together, and had appointed to riſe on the 16th of Auguſt, " *to burn the churches, blow up* " *the parliament, cut off the head of the king, and* " *aboliſh all taxes.*" Theſe letters were pretended to be found among the papers of Dr. Prieſtley and Mr. Ruſſell, and two of them were brought and read to the rioters by two perſons on horſeback at Showell Green, the houſe of Mr. Ruſſell, while it was in flames. It is impoſſible for an honeſt heart not to feel indignation againſt men who could be

guilty of ſuch aggravated wickedneſs. The mob, by ſuch artifices, were inflamed to an inconceivable pitch of fury, and the ruins of Mr. Taylor's houſe at Moſley Hall (which ſome of them had determined to ſpare) are an awful monument of the powerful effect of theſe incentives.

At length tranquillity was reſtored; and government determined to take the proſecution of theſe offenders into their own hands. The High Church party, who had originally foſtered the ſpirit of religious intolerance, and now contemplated with pleaſure the ſmoking monuments of its triumph, gave no aſſiſtance towards the diſcovery of the inſtigators or perpetrators of theſe horrid deeds. Witneſſes were dragged with difficulty, and at the hazard of every ſpecies of perſonal inſult, to give information before the magiſtrates; and when at laſt ſome of the rioters were brought to trial at the aſſizes, the reluctance of the juries to convict, even on the cleareſt evidence, ſhewed how fatally and extenſively the prejudices of High Churchmen had been diſſeminated through the county. Attempts were made to pollute the adminiſtration of juſtice, and witneſſes were tampered with and intimidated in open court; but againſt four unfortunate wretches the charges were ſo clearly proved, that even juries, ſummoned chiefly from Birmingham and its neighbourhood, pronounced them guilty of capital offences. Two of them, being men of infamous characters in other reſpects, have been executed, but the others have been pardoned. By whoſe interference, and through what intereſt theſe offenders have been ſo indulgently dealt with, is not exactly

exactly known, but there is reaſon to believe that the life of one of them has been ſpared through the *miſtake* of the perſons, who took a ſubſequent extrajudicial examination of *one* of the witneſſes produced at the trial.

The vindictive ſpirit of the High Church party was hardly more ſtrongly marked by their rejoicings during the commiſſion of theſe diſgraceful outrages, than by their ſubſequent conduct. They have ſhewn no deſire to alleviate the misfortunes of their neighbours; with them calamity has no claim to pity, nor adverſity to conſolation, and a difference in religious opinion cancels all the claims of humanity. "The Friends and Fellow-Churchmen" of the rectors of the pariſhes in Birmingham had deſtroyed the meeting-houſes of the Diſſenters, and it would not have been a breach of chriſtian charity, if they had repaired that inconvenience by the loan of their churches. At Banbury, the Diſſenters do not conceive their meeting-houſe to be profaned, becauſe churchmen put up their prayers in it; nor at Belfaſt does the rector find his church * contaminated becauſe the Diſſenters are permitted to worſhip God there. We have ſeen a miniſter of religion, of exemplary purity of life, whoſe labours in his paſtoral office had been *particularly* grateful to his people; a philoſopher, whoſe fame had ex-

* In June 1716, Mr. Gibbon was ſuſpended by his dioceſan (Biſhop Atterbury) for lending his church at Graveſend to the Dutch ſoldiers, returning from Scotland to embark for Holland, for performing divine ſervice, *a favour which they repreſented to him they had never been denied during their march*; but he was ſoon afterwards reſtored.

tended far beyond the narrow confines of this iſland, driven from his family and friends, and made a wanderer on the face of the earth by the wild fanaticiſm of religious bigots, and his townſmen rejoicing in his misfortunes. The houſes of Diſſenters had been deſtroyed, and their property waſted by lawleſs violence, through, as they conceived, the want of a ſpirited and early exertion of the civil power; yet while thoſe houſes were lying in ruins, the liberal inhabitants of Birmingham inſulted the ſufferers by calling a town's meeting, (on Auguſt the 12th, 1791) at which they returned their thanks to thoſe magiſtrates "for the ſolicitude "they exhibited on *the firſt intimation* given them "of diſturbances *likely to take place* in this town on "the 14th of July, and for their extraordinary vi-"gilance and unwearied perſonal attention on that "and every ſubſequent day till public tranquillity "was happily reſtored;" and alſo to each of thoſe gentlemen, "a handſome piece of plate, as a "grateful acknowledgement of *their eminent ſer-*"*vices*, repeatedly experienced by this town and "neighbourhood, *and eſpecially during the late riots*; "and that the chairman be deſired to procure and "preſent the ſame to them." By theſe reſolutions it appears, that before the 14th of July, the magiſtrates were prepared *to expect* diſturbances, and in ſome way or other exhibited ſolicitude upon the occaſion. The Diſſenters have to lament that the arrangements made *to prevent theſe riots* ſhould have ſo totally failed, and that the *eminent ſervices* of theſe magiſtrates towards putting a ſtop to them ſhould have been ſo entirely unſucceſsful.

If

If Mr. Madan or Mr. Curtis had been obliged to fly inſtead of Dr. Prieſtley, and the houſes of the principal Churchmen, inſtead of the principal Diſſenters, had preſented the diſmal ſpectacle then exhibited, it may be fairly aſked, would ſuch a town's meeting have been called, or ſuch reſolutions paſſed? When, with better reaſon, the High Bailiff, Clergy, and other principal inhabitants of the town and neighbourhood of Birmingham, preſented an addreſs of thanks to his Majeſty, for his paternal care in ſending the military to ſuppreſs the riots, it was couched in ſuch terms, that no Diſſenter, or other perſon who acknowledged fallibility in man, could ſign it *. High Churchmen are ſtill in the daily habit of calumniating the Diſſenters in anonymous papers circulated through the town of Birmingham, and endeavouring to keep up the rancorous ſpirit, as yet but very imperfectly ſubdued, by threatening them with freſh outrages. It will hardly be credited, that a ſubſcription has been made to defray the expences of defending thoſe "Gentlemen" of the Church and King party, who were tried for their lives as felons at Warwick, or that the clergy have again exaſperated their hearers, by freſh philippics from their pulpits.

* It contains this paragraph, "We cannot neglect this occaſion of pledging ourſelves to ſupport your Majeſty's illuſtrious houſe, and to defend that happy conſtitution both in Church and State, *againſt every attempt at innovation*, at the riſk of every thing dear to us."

The Committee who prepared this addreſs, conſiſted of the *Rev. Mr. Curtis*, the Rev. Mr. Price, the Rev. Mr. Young, the Rev. Mr. James, the *Rev. Mr. Burn*, Dr. Gilby, Dr. Pearſon, Mr. Peter Capper, Mr. Theodore Price, *Mr. John Brooke*, and Mr. William Wallis Maſon.

The conſequence has been ſuch as might be expected; the ſpirit of the High Church party is becoming daily more virulent, and, but for the military force ſtationed at Birmingham, freſh outrages might be juſtly dreaded. The friends of Dr. Prieſtley, anxious for his perſonal ſafety, have been obliged to requeſt he will not, for the preſent, venture among them, and his congregation have reluctantly given up their faithful and beloved paſtor. And not to Birmingham only is this evil ſpirit confined, as may be ſeen in the following account of a late tranſaction in another part of the county.

At Warwick, in the Sunday Schools belonging to the Church, it was made a rule that the children of *pariſhioners only* ſhould be admitted. The Diſſenters opened a ſchool for the benefit of ſuch poor children in the town and neighbourhood as did not come within the deſcription. The flouriſhing ſtate of the Diſſenting Sunday School at firſt obtained the entire approbation, but afterwards excited the jealouſy, of the vicar of St. Nicholas. He avowed an intention to uſe all "*fair and honourable*" means to induce the children to leave it, yet afterwards threatened to deprive one perſon of the *bread*, another of the *coals*, provided at the public expence, unleſs they withdrew their children from the Diſſenting School; and another was reminded, that the ſteward of a certain noble lord could "deprive "him of his bread." At length, ungenerouſly intending to take advantage of the unfortunate diſturbances of Birmingham, which the Diſſenters of Warwick, who are intimately connected with thoſe at Birmingham, could not be ſuppoſed to view without

without concern, the High Church party determined to make ſhort work of it, and require at once that the doors of the Diſſenting School ſhould be ſhut up. The Diſſenters, in order to put a ſtop to further diſpute, propoſed that two perſons on the part of the Church of England, and two perſons on their part, ſhould be appointed to make enquiries into the wiſhes of the parents of the children belonging to their ſchool, and that none ſhould be allowed to continue whoſe parents did not *expreſsly deſire* it, but that the children of ſuch as did *chuſe* it, ſhould continue to attend. This propoſal was rejected as unſatisfactory, and a meeting of *all* the inhabitants, who were members of the Church of England, called, to confer on the ſubject of an unfortunate Sunday School, which had thus innocently "*given cauſe of alarm* to the *clergy*, "and ſeveral of the inhabitants of the borough." A few of the moſt violent and bigotted Churchmen accordingly met, a clergyman was placed in the chair, witneſſes were examined before this mock tribunal, and it was *unanimouſly* agreed, that the conduct of the Diſſenters had been improper; and they reſolved, that they "think it their duty to "unite, and will heartily concur in every legal and "honourable meaſure to reſiſt ſuch attempts, and "*to ſupport the excellent conſtitution of this country* "*in church and ſtate*;" and a committee was appointed "to conſider and determine upon a plan "*for ſupporting the eſtabliſhed Church in this borough.*" Great events have ſometimes ariſen from little cauſes, and the wiſe heads of Warwick foreſee the deſtruction of the preſent ſyſtem of government, from the proſperity of a Diſſenting Sunday School! Their

conduct, if one could conceive them to be in earneſt, has been in the higheſt degree abſurd, but it may poſſibly deſerve a much harſher epithet. High Churchmen have ever looked with a jealous eye to the ſchools of the Diſſenters. By the Act of Uniformity, none could be kept but by maſters licenced by the biſhop; but by the Toleration Act, diſſenting ſchoolmaſters qualifying as therein required were exempted from penalties. By the Schiſm Act *, they were again deprived of this exemption, except that by the grace and favour of High Churchmen they were permitted "to inſtruct "youth in reading, writing, arithmetic, or any part "of mathematical learning relating to navigation, "or any mechanical art only, ſo as ſuch reading, "*writing*," &c. "ſhould be taught in the *Engliſh* "*tongue* †." That act was to have taken place on the very day Queen Anne died, and one of the firſt acts paſſed after the acceſſion of the Hanover family repealed it. In 1779, the reſtrictions impoſed on diſſenting miniſters and ſchoolmaſters by the Toleration Act were ſomewhat relaxed; and in 1791, the churchmen of Warwick appoint a committee to deprive them of the privileges granted by the legiſlature!

In Aris's Birmingham Gazette of Monday, Oct. 24, 1791, appeared the following extraordinary letters:

* In the progreſs of this bill in the Houſe of Commons, it was reſolved, that it ſhould be made to extend to the Diſſenters of Ireland, and yet another clauſe, extending the Toleration Act to that country was negatived.

† See Chandler's Debates of the Commons, vol. v. p. 140, where will be found a copy of the bill.

"To

" *To the Printer of Aris's Birmingham Gazette.*

" Mr. PEARSON,

" HAVING received an anonymous letter, of " which the following is an exact copy, and which " appears to come from a real friend to truth and " the eſtabliſhment, I ſhould be exceedingly ready " to ſatisfy both him, and the public, *that the mem-* " *bers of the eſtabliſhment, clergy and laity, were ſo far* " *from raiſing or encouraging the late riots, that they* " *inſtantly took every means in their power to ſuppreſs* " *them*; but as I do not think it becoming to give " any particular anſwer to an anonymous letter, I " ſhall requeſt you to publiſh this, and thereby in- " form the writer of the letter, that *if he will favour* " *me with his name, I will lay before the public ſuch* " *facts as I flatter myſelf will fully convince them that* " *the members of the eſtabliſhment were by no means* " *the occaſion of the late riots in this place and neigh-* " *bourhood.*

" I am, Sir,

" Your's, &c.

" W. VILLERS."

" Birmingham, Oct. 17, 1791."

" (C O P Y.)

" To Mr. VILLERS,

" High Bailiff,

" Birmingham.

" London, October 13, 1791.

" SIR,

" THE Birmingham paper is a proof of the " attention you ſhew to the intereſts of the town,

" therefore

" therefore a ſtranger without apology addreſſes
" you. *Dr. Prieſtley's letter inſinuates the late troubles*
" *were raiſed by the eſtabliſhment againſt him and the*
" *Diſſenters.* It is preſumed thoſe who know the
" town well know to the contrary; but it is a truth,
" *the Diſſenters in diſtant counties ſpeak with much*
" *acrimony on the ſame ſubject.* Surely a calm and
" diſpaſſionate anſwer might be given: — juſtice and
" the credit of the town call for it. I am,

" SIR,

" A Well Wiſher to the Town."

One can hardly conceive that Mr. Villers was the author of the paper thus bearing his ſignature. But if he was, let him not ſtand upon the ceremony of requiring the name of his correſpondent; for the honour of his Church, for the ſake of religion in general, let me conjure him, if he can, to wipe off the foul imputations that have been caſt upon the clergy and laity of the eſtabliſhment at Birmingham. When Mr. Villers ſhall have performed his promiſe, I will with pleaſure acknowledge the truth of Biſhop Horſley's prophecy, concerning Dr. Prieſtley's ſafety from the rage of churchmen, and cancel every word of this publication concerning the late riots, that can be conſtrued to convey the ſlighteſt cenſure on any perſon included in his vindication. But it requires not deep erudition to diſcover that he has promiſed more than he can poſſibly perform; for if the members of the eſtabliſhment did not commit the late outrages, by whom

whom were they committed? Did the Diſſenters burn their own houſes, and did the Earl of Aylesford and his fifteen coadjutors addreſs *them* by the name of *fellow-churchmen?* or were the incendiaries aerial beings, to whom *the imagination of the Diſſenters* only have given "a local habitation and "a name." Mr. Villers muſt forget that the dwelling-houſes of Diſſenters have been pillaged and deſtroyed, while thoſe of the members of the eſtabliſhment were not violated; and that diſſenting meeting-houſes have been demoliſhed, while the churches remained uninjured. He muſt forget that *ſome* members of the eſtabliſhment have already ſuffered the ſevereſt puniſhment our laws can inflict in expiation of their crimes, and that *more* muſt probably ſhare their fate.

The religious fanaticiſm which has thus diſgraced Birmingham and the county of Warwick, is but a *ſymptom* of the general diſorder which High Churchmen have inſinuated into every part of the kingdom, and into the vitals of government itſelf. The eruption has diſcharged itſelf with volcanic force on one devoted ſpot, but the mountain is ſtill convulſed, and threatens general deſtruction. At Mancheſter, Briſtol, and other places, the ſame ſpirit diſcovered itſelf, but not in ſufficient force to do miſchief; and the viſitation charges of biſhops, delivered even while the *Church and King* party were burning the habitations of Diſſenters, and aſſize ſermons preached almoſt before their fires were extinguiſhed, ſhew that the demon of bigotry is not yet glutted. Graduates from Oxford, with

with exultation, have renewed their charges of ſedition, and inſolently reproach the ſufferers with being the *ſole* cauſe of their own misfortunes. The public prints, under the influence of government*, have continued their courſe of falſehood and miſrepreſentation; and High Churchmen, glorying in the ſcandalous exceſſes of their party, hold up the fate of the Diſſenters at Birmingham as a juſt puniſhment for all who ſhall dare to diſſent from the eſtabliſhed religion of their country, and complain of grievances to its legiſlature.

The Diſſenters of Birmingham have, under trying circumſtances, conducted themſelves with exemplary moderation. Accuſed of no crime, and conſcious of no delinquency, they truſt that government is not unmindful of their ſituation, and will provide for their protection. But they, and the Diſſenters in general, muſt obſerve with regret the ſtrong impreſſion made by the miſrepreſentations of their enemies, and deprecate the riſing ſpirit of perſecution. Upon former occaſions, when the meeting-houſes of Diſſenters were deſtroyed, and their property waſted†, by Jacobites and High

* According to Mr. Burke theſe prints ſpeak the ſentiments of our governors, ſince they have not diſclaimed the paragraphs alluded to. See his "Appeal from the New Whigs to the "Old," p. 2. note.

† This happened (beſides their loſſes in the two rebellions) at Newcaſtle under Line in 1702, at London in 1710, at Briſtol in 1714, in Staffordſhire in 1715, &c.; and the ſpirit of diſloyalty, which was characteriſtic of the High Church party, was ſtrongly manifeſted in riots at Oxford in 1716, which were made the ſubject of inquiry and cenſure in the Houſe of Lords.

Churchmen,

Churchmen, they were treated with every degree of confidence and affection by government, and received compenſation for their loſſes. But if the time ſhall hereafter come (and no one who ſpeculates on the preſent ſituation of parties in this kingdom can be aſſured it is far diſtant) when the government of their country ſhall be not able or not careful to protect them from the violence of High Churchmen, they feel conſolation in the reflection that there will be happier countries, and climes more congenial to liberty, ready to receive them; where they may enjoy, and ſupport by argument, their religious opinions, without being ſtigmatized as rebels, or traitors; where they can be ſecure in their property and perſons; and where they will be excluded by no teſts from the common rights of citizens. Such an aſylum for the oppreſſed already preſents itſelf in America; and in Ireland, Churchmen and Diſſenters can live together in the mutual intercourſe of friendſhip. For *their country* they fear much; they have ſeen revived, and foſtered at court, that party which the friends of liberty have ever regarded with abhorrence, and the princes of the Houſe of Hanover have, from motives of ſelf-preſervation, always ſtudiouſly kept under. To the ears of the true Whigs of England, the jacobitical cry of "Church and King*" can

* I take this cry to have been borrowed from the papiſts, who, believing that the pope alone had a right delegated to him from God to make kings, very properly put *their church* firſt. The Jacobites then uſed it, and with reaſon; for they believed that both Church and King had a *jure divino* original, and that,

can afford no pleaſure, nor can the triumphs of High Churchmen ſecure our happy conſtitution. The plundering of houſes, and the deſtruction of private property, do not tend to preſerve the public peace; and the riots at Birmingham afford a bad preſage of what may be expected from the revival of the party. Religious animoſity invigorates its zeal in politics, while politics are made a maſk for perſecution. "The Church," as Mr. Fox juſtly obſerved, "never interfered in politics, "but for miſchief," and its hiſtory, as a party, is made up of rebellions, proſcriptions, tumults, and devaſtation. How ſuch an evil ſpirit ſhould have been regularly nurtured for ſo long a ſucceſſion of time in ſo large a part of the clergy and people of England, it ſhall be now my buſineſs to explain: it cannot be unimportant to trace it to its ſource.

as to the *Lords* and *Commons*, they were only the trappings of royalty. But there ſeems to be no natural connection between a Church exiſting under a *divine* commiſſion, and a King deriving power from *the people*.

CHAPTER III.

Perſecution, for Conſcience-ſake, a Tenet of the Church of England.

IF it ſhould be aſſerted, that among the clergy of the eſtabliſhed Church may be found many advocates for a limited toleration of ſectaries, I will moſt readily admit it. I might cite, as an authority, the Reviewer himſelf, who tells us, that "the notion of perſecuting men for their opinions "is now indeed juſtly and happily exploded. "A toleration of *all* the different ſects, each "in its own modes of worſhip, no leſs than in its "doctrines, is alſo admitted, and become a max-"im of government;" but this is the language of the individual, not of his Church; and if he wiſhes us to believe that the perſecution of ſectaries is not ſtill a tenet of the eſtabliſhment, he either betrays his own ignorance, or wilfully aſſerts what he knows to be falſe.

The conſtitution of the Church has received no material alteration ſince its original inſtitution at the reformation. At that period the State having ſucceſsfully reſiſted the uſurpations of popery, arrogated to itſelf, as by divine right, the moſt unjuſt of them all, the power to regulate, not only the actions,

actions, but the conſciences, of men. It declared what ſhould be the creed of its ſubjects, and made it penal for Engliſhmen to believe any religious doctrines, but thoſe it had previouſly ſanctioned. The Church was entruſted with the care of men's ſouls, and declared to be the ſacred depoſitory of the true religion, as handed down to a *jure divino* king. It was veſted with powers to reform and ſecure the ſalvation of thoſe whoſe belief did not come up to the eſtabliſhed ſtandard, by means of ſpiritual cenſures; and, where Nonconformiſts were obſtinately determined to go to heaven in their own way, the clergy of this Proteſtant Church were authoriſed to call in the aid of the ſecular power, and extirpate the hereſy and heretic together. In the reigns of Henry VIII. of Elizabeth, and James I. the eſtabliſhment triumphed in perſecution, and prieſts were gratified with the blood of martyrs. In the year 1676, when the *State* began to adopt more moderate maxims, the law was repealed, by which the civil power might be called upon to enforce the ſentence of eccleſiaſtics for the burning of heretics. But neither then, nor at any ſubſequent time, has *any* alteration been made in the conſtitution of the *Church*. Its clergy even now boaſt of its divine origin; it ſtill aſſumes to itſelf excluſively within this kingdom, *all truth*; it ſtill may perſecute ſome ſectaries as heretics, and puniſh them for their opinions "by ex-"communication, degradation, and other eccle-"ſiaſtical cenſures, not extending to death." It is not clear that eccleſiaſtical judges may not even now *doom* them

them to the flames, though the civil power will not execute the ſentence. But the cenſures juſt mentioned are not light ones, for the ſentence of excommunication (which moſt affects laymen) is accompanied with diſability to be a juryman, or witneſs, to bring an action in any court of juſtice; and, if the party does not ſubmit within forty days, he may be caſt into gaol, and impriſoned for life, unleſs he is *reconciled to the Church*, and finds the ſecurity of others for his future obedience, or ſwears himſelf * to obey the commands of the ordinary.

By the ſtatute of the 1ſt Eliz. c. 1. a boundary was ſet to the eccleſiaſtical juriſdiction by the ſtate, and it was enacted, that no tenets ſhould be puniſhed as heretical in the ſpiritual courts, but thoſe which had been theretofore adjudged to be ſo by the authority of the canonical ſcriptures; by ſome of the firſt four general councils, or any other council, if declared in the expreſs and plain words of the ſaid canonical ſcriptures; or which ſhould afterwards be ſo declared by the parliament, with the aſſent of the clergy in convocation. Thus, as Mr. Juſtice Blackſtone remarks, "a man continued ſtill

* This oath is not the ſame in all the dioceſes, and ſome Diſſenters at Swanſea, a few years ago, being excommunicated, were under great difficulties, on account of not being able conſcientiouſly to take the oath uſually adminiſtered in the dioceſe in which it is ſituated. It is abſurd that the form of *cutting off* nonconformiſts from a church, to which they never belonged, ſhould be ſtill retained; and that they ſhould be forced to *make their peace* with a church, to which, according to the Reviewer, they muſt neceſſarily be enemies. But there is no abſurdity too glaring for bigots in religion to defend.

" liable to be burnt for what perhaps he did not " underſtand to be hereſy, till the eccleſiaſtical " judge ſo interpreted the words of the canonical " ſcriptures." And even at this day, whoever, of the ſectaries not tolerated, ſhall dare to interpret the holy ſcriptures for himſelf, may be puniſhed by eccleſiaſtical cenſures, if an eccleſiaſtical judge ſhould decree ſuch interpretation to be erroneous.

The Act of Toleration was another interference of the ſtate to check the power of eccleſiaſtics, but without altering the conſtitution of the Church. Laymen had before declared what ſhould be deemed hereſy in the ſpiritual courts, they now exempted *ſome deſcriptions* of Diſſenters wholly from their juriſdiction, while all others, and oppugners of the Trinity by name, were expreſsly reſerved for the perſecuting ſpirit of the Church to operate upon. How truly then might Mr. Locke, writing to Limborch*, ſoon after the paſſing of this act, ſay, " *Tolerantiam apud* " *nos jam tandem lege ſtabilitatam te ante hæc audiiſſe* " *nullus dubito. Non ea forſan latitudine, qua tu &* " *tui ſimiles veri, & ſine ambitione, vel invidia* " *chriſtiani optarent. Sed aliquid eſt prodire tenus.* " *His initiis jacta ſpero ſunt libertatis & pacis funda-* " *menta, quibus ſtabilienda olim erat Chriſti eccleſia.*"

In the laſt ſeſſion of parliament, the legiſlature again humanely ſtept forward for the relief of another claſs of ſufferers under our perſecuting laws; I mean the Catholics. The Biſhops did not think fit to oppoſe a bill ſupported by miniſterial influence,

* Locke's Works, vol. iv. p. 406.

more,

more, perhaps, from motives of policy, than of humanity. They made a faint attempt in the Houſe of Lords to poſtpone it to the next ſeſſion, and then, making a virtue of neceſſity, gave it no further oppoſition. By this act, ſuch Catholics as ſubmit to take the oaths therein impoſed are admitted to a toleration, differing little from that enjoyed by the Proteſtant Diſſenters complying with the Toleration Act. With reſpect to the Nonjuring Catholics, they are ſtill in a worſe ſituation than any other ſectaries. They may, indeed, be poſſeſſed of land, but they cannot live upon it in ſecurity. They are liable not only to be proſecuted as heretics in the eccleſiaſtical courts, and as recuſants in the temporal ones, but alſo to other peculiar proſecutions, extending to the infliction of the heavieſt penalties *.

But it is not through the medium of ſpiritual courts, and by the coercion of ſpiritual cenſures only, that other Nonconformiſts, beſides Papiſts, may be puniſhed for their religious opinions; and Engliſhmen may be ſurprized to learn, that, notwithſtanding the moderation which even High Churchmen now find it neceſſary to boaſt of, all thoſe ſectaries who do not come within the protection of the Toleration Act, or the ſtatute enacted in the laſt ſeſſion in favour of a particular claſs of Catholics, as oppugners of the Trinity, Moravians, Swedenborgians, Nonjuring Catholics, Jews, &c. are liable to penalties in the temporal courts, for

* See theſe penalties enumerated at the end of Sir Henry Engleſield's anſwer to the "Review," where he intimates that perhaps they may extend to *death* itſelf.

worſhipping God according to their own modes, which reach their property, liberty, and even lives. For thus, according to Mr. Locke, ſtands the law reſpecting thoſe, who ſtill remain unprotected by a legal toleration.

" In the 1ſt year of Queen Elizabeth, there " was a penalty of 1s. a Sunday and holiday, laid " upon every one who came not to the Common " Prayer then eſtabliſhed. This penalty of 1s. a " time not prevailing as was deſired, in the 23d " year of her reign was increaſed to 20l. a month, " and impriſonment for non-payment, within three " months after judgment given. In the 29th of " Elizabeth, to draw this yet cloſer, and make it " more forcible, it was enacted, that whoever, on " one conviction, did not continue to pay on the " 20l. per month, without any other conviction or " proceedings againſt him, till he ſubmitted and " conformed, ſhould forfeit all his goods, and two-" thirds of his lands for life. But this being not " yet thought ſufficient, it was, in the 35th year of " that Queen, ——— enacted, that going to " conventicles, or a month's abſence from church, " was to be puniſhed with impriſonment until the " offender conformed; and if he conformed not " within three months, then he was to abjure the " realm, and forfeit all his goods and chattels for " ever, and his lands and tenements during his " life; and if he would not abjure, or abjuring did " not depart the realm within a time prefixed, or " returned again, he was to ſuffer death as a felon *."

* See Third Letter on Toleration, Locke's Works, edition of 1777. vol. ii p. 496.

Theſe

Theſe laws are ſtill put in execution; and about three years ago, in Cornwall, a poor fellow, a Diſſenter, was libelled in the ſpiritual court for not attending divine worſhip at his pariſh church on Sunday. He had not taken the oaths required by the Toleration Act, but it being a ſufficient defence to take them at any time during the perſecution, he applied to the magiſtrates of the county at their quarter ſeſſions, who illegally *refuſed to adminiſter them.* The conſequence was that he was excommunicated. Upon a repreſentation from the committee in London for taking care of the civil concerns of the Diſſenters, the chairman of the ſeſſions acknowledged the error of the juſtices, and the man took the oaths at the enſuing ſeſſions; but it was then *too late.* A noble peer (Earl Stanhope) in the year 1789, moved in the Houſe of Lords for the repeal of theſe perſecuting laws; but to the diſgrace of the Church, the Biſhops contrived to defeat the attempt.

The anxiety of the clergy to ſecure their favourite doctrine of the Trinity from being ſacrilegiouſly diſputed, occaſioned thoſe who denied it to be excepted out of the Toleration Act; but even this did not content them: for in the 9th and 10th of William the Third, an act was paſſed, (c. 32.) that (beſides all the penalties abovementioned) perſons educated in, or who have profeſſed the chriſtian religion within this realm, by writing, printing, teaching, or adviſed ſpeaking, denying any one of the perſons in the Holy Trinity to be God, or the chriſtian religion to be true, or the holy ſcriptures of the Old and New Teſtament to be of divine authority, ſuch perſons, upon con-

viction, for the first offence, "shall be adjudged incapable, and disabled in law, to all intents and purposes whatsoever, to have or enjoy any office or offices, employment or employments, ecclesiastical, civil, or military, or any part in them, or any profit or advantage appertaining to them, or any of them;" and for the second offence, shall be disabled to sue in any court, to be guardian of any child, or executor or administrator to any person, or capable of any legacy or deed of gift, or to bear any office or benefice for ever, within this realm, and shall suffer imprisonment for the space of three years.

There is another circumstance of great hardship and oppression, which is becoming daily more grievous, viz. that all sectaries, except Quakers and Jews, are obliged to solemnize their marriages according to the rites of the established Church. Until the year 1753, their marriages, solemnized in their own congregations, were valid, and the alteration then made in the law has been productive of very serious hardships. There are now in Nottingham gaol some women, who have been confined there several years, and, unless the legislature shall humanely interfere, must be imprisoned *for life*. They are said to be persons of irreproachable character, and have been married according to the ceremonies of their own sect; but as they are neither Quakers nor Jews, their marriages are, in the eye of the law, invalid, and their children bastards. They have been libelled in the ecclesiastical court for incontinency, and are now confined upon a sentence of excommunication for not submitting to its orders. As an instance of the absurdity of this law, it may be observed,

ſerved, that a Proteſtant Diſſenter, who is entitled to the public enjoyment of his own mode of worſhip, cannot be married in his own church, while that privilege is allowed to Jews, who are not tolerated at all; whoſe ſynagogues are illegal conventicles, and who remain in England at the conſtant riſque of proſecutions, by which their property, liberty, and life, may be forfeited.

So long, therefore, as the preſent ſyſtem of church diſcipline ſhall remain eſtabliſhed; ſo long as by no public act the right to perſecute ſhall be diſclaimed either by church or ſtate; ſo long as the ſtate ſhall leave large claſſes of citizens, profeſſing the faith of Chriſt, to the cenſures of the ſpiritual courts, and keep in force laws, by which their fortunes, liberties, and lives may be taken away by the temporal ones; ſo long as ſectaries ſhall be obliged to comply with the ceremonies of the eſtabliſhed church in the ſolemnization of their marriages, it cannot with truth be aſſerted that a toleration of *all* the different ſects of Chriſtians, each in its own mode of worſhip and doctrines, is admitted in England, and made a maxim of *its* government.

My readers are now prepared for the following liberal paſſage in "the Review." "In this "country, a ſtateſman finds an eſtabliſhed church "amidſt a variety of brawling ſects, all enjoying "*the utmoſt liberty of conſcience*, yet all clamorous "againſt the perſecuting ſpirit of the hierarchy, *to* "*whoſe candour and liberality* they are in great "part indebted for the bleſſing of a general tole-"ration*." One might conclude from the be-

* P. 18.

ginning of the ſentence, that the eſtabliſhed Church was more ſinned againſt than ſinning, and that all clamour and narrowneſs of ſpirit was confined to the diſſenting ſects. If the Reviewer had ſaid, that a ſtateſman finds in England one brawling ſect *eſtabliſhed*, which, claiming to be ſolely poſſeſſed of all truth, and the ſecret of ſaving ſouls, perſecuted *all* others, until the civil power was obliged to take *ſome* under its protection, he would have been a little nearer the fact. Thoſe Diſſenters, who are exempted by the ſtate ſtom the juriſdiction of the ſpiritual courts, are obliged to the candour and liberality of the hierarchy for the bleſſing, as is a ſheep to the gentleneſs of a wolf that is muzzled. Notwithſtanding this, the moderation of the Church, and the happy ſituation of Diſſenters in this country, are the conſtant topics of High Churchmen. The laymen of Suffolk, aſſembled to make reſolutions in oppoſition to the late application of the Diſſenters, declared it to be the earneſt wiſh of their meeting, that the bleſſings of a *full* toleration ſhould be extended to *Chriſtians of all denominations*, " which bleſſing " they conceive the Proteſtant Diſſenters in Eng- " land do actually enjoy ;" and, if we may believe the clergy of the archdeaconry of York, the Toleration Act gives " *full* liberty for *every man* to " enjoy his own religious tenets, and to worſhip " God in his own way." The Catholics and Unitarians may call upon the gentry of Suffolk to carry their earneſt wiſhes into effect ; and the Jews may requeſt a copy of *their* Toleration Act from the clergy of the archdeaconry of York.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER IV.

Paſſive Obedience and Non-reſiſtance, Doctrines of the Church of England, and the Clergy infected by them.

THE Reviewer, and his aſſociates, have affected to take offence at the principles of the modern Diſſenters, and have boldly challenged a preference for their own church, from the congeniality of its principles with thoſe of the ſtate. Whether they ought not to have caſt out the beam out of their own eye, before they attempted to caſt out the mote out of their brother's eye, let the world now decide. In this chapter my deſign is, to drag into public view the doctrines of the Church of England with regard to civil liberty. In ſo doing I will not (as the Reviewer and other High Churchmen have done with reſpect to the Diſſenters) reſt my proof of the doctrines of the Church on the writings of individuals (though where there is *one ſettled* rule of faith it might carry authority), but will ſhew what the principles of every *true* member of the Church of England are, or *ought to be*, from the articles of that Church; its other *public documents*; its *injunctions* and *canons*; its *homilies*; its *rubric* and *occaſional forms of prayer*; the *orders of its metropolitans*; and the *public proceedings of the two univerſities*. In the reſult, when it ſhall appear that paſſive obedience and non-reſiſtance are enforced,

ced, in ſuch terms as *not to admit of any exception for caſes of extreme neceſſity*, the public will judge whether Diſſenters or Churchmen hold principles beſt adapted to our preſent happy conſtitution, *as ſettled at the revolution.* The Reviewer and his friends have provoked the enquiry by their unfounded calumnies, and the Proteſtant Diſſenters have nothing to apprehend from a compariſon.

In 1533, there was a convocation of the clergy, and at the concluſion was printed an explanation of the chief points of religion, ſigned by both the Archbiſhops, ſeventeen Biſhops, eight Archdeacons, and ſeventeen Doctors of Divinity and Law, under the title of "The Inſtitution of a Chriſtian "Man." This work was, in 1540, referred to a ſelect number of biſhops and clergy, who ſate by virtue of a commiſſion from the King confirmed in Parliament, and made many alterations *. Henry VIII. himſelf added a preface two years afterwards, and it was printed at laſt under the new title of "A neceſſary Doctrine and Erudition "for any Chriſtian Man, ſet furthe by the Kinges "Majeſtie of England," &c. In the preface it is ſaid to be "ſette furthe with the adviſe of "our clergy," and to have been both ſeen and liked very well by the "Lordes bothe ſpirituall "and temporal, with the nether houſe of our "parliament." In 1542, Bonner, then Biſhop of London, ſet out certain injunctions, in which

* See Burnet's Hiſtory of the Reformation, 4th edition, vol. i. p. 234, 273.

he directed his clergy, to provide of their own, and ſtudy this book called "The Inſtitution of a Chriſ-"tian Man," otherwiſe called the *Biſhop's Book* *. The commentary on the fifth commandment runs thus, "Subjects be bound not to withdraw their "fealty, truth, love, and obedience towards their "prince, *for any cauſe whatſoever it be*," &c. In the expoſition of the ſixth commandment it is ſaid, "Moreover no ſubjects may draw their ſwords "againſt their prince *for any cauſe whatſoever it* "*be*. ——— And although princes, which "be the chief and ſupream heads of their realms "do otherwiſe than they ought to do; yet *God* "*hath aſſigned no judges over them in this world,* "*but will have the judgment of them reſerved to him-*"*ſelf*, and will puniſh them when he ſeeth his time. "And for amendment of ſuch princes that do "otherwiſe than they ſhould do, *the ſubjects may* "*not rebel, but muſt pray to God*; which hath the "hearts of princes in his hands, that he ſo turn "their hearts unto him, that they may uſe the ſword "which he hath given them unto his pleaſure."

The thirty-nine articles were compoſed in a convocation of the clergy held in 1562, and confirmed in 1571, and contain "the true doctrine" of the Church of England. Not only every clergyman, but every youth, on his admiſſion into the univerſity of Oxford, and every graduate (with the exception of Bachelors of Arts at Cambridge) whether a layman, or in orders, at both univerſi-

* Ibid. Collection of Records, to book iii. No. 26.

ties,

ties, is obliged to ſubſcribe them. The thirty-ſeventh article, reſpecting civil magiſtrates, has theſe words, " We give not to our princes the " adminiſtering either of God's word, or of the " ſacraments; but that only prerogative, which we " ſee to have been always *given to all godly princes* " in holy ſcriptures *by God himſelf*; that is, that " they ſhould rule all eſtates and degrees *committed* " *to their charge by God*, whether they be eccle- " ſiaſtical or temporal, and reſtrain with the civil " ſword the ſtubborn and evil doers."

The thirty-fifth article declares the two books of homilies " contain a godly and wholeſome doctrine " neceſſary for theſe times," and therefore orders them " to be read in churches, by the miniſters, " diligently and diſtinctly, that they may be un- " derſtood of the people." Theſe homilies were ſo highly eſteemed by the Church, that one of them, or a ſermon, is to be read every Sunday in the church, and in the year 1636, on account of the plague, a form of prayer, together with an order for faſting, was put out by authority, and in the preface to the concluding exhortation we are told, that " the name of homilies, by a miſunderſtanding " conceit, is not acceptable with many; and yet " they are nothing elſe in effect but epiſtles, or " declarations, *grounded upon the word of God*, to " teach Chriſtian men and women their duties to " his divine Majeſty, how to believe, and what " to practice, *carefully and ſoundly written unto* " *us by apoſtolical men, with the approbation of the* " *Church.*"

In

In the directions concerning preachers put out by authority the 5th of March 1685, they are directed, " that upon all good occaſions they faith-
" fully inſtruct the people in their bounden duty
" of ſubjection and obedience to their governors,
" ſuperior and ſubordinate, of all ſorts, and to the
" eſtabliſhed laws, according to the word of God
" *and the doctrine of the Church of England, as it*
" *is contained in the homilies of obedience,* and the
" articles of religion, ſet forth by public authority."
Let us now ſee what theſe homilies of ſuch high authority teach, as the bounden duty of ſubjection and obedience of the people to their governors.

The ſecond part of the homily entitled, *Concerning good order and obedience to rulers and magiſtrates,* has this paſſage: " Subjects are bound to obey them
" (i. e. governors) as God's miniſters, though they
" be evil, not only for fear, but for conſcience-
" ſake; and here, good people, let us mark dili-
" gently, that it is not lawful for inferiors and
" ſubjects in any caſe to reſiſt, and ſtand againſt,
" the ſuperior powers; for St. Paul's words be
" plain, that whoſo withſtandeth ſhall get to
" themſelves damnation.——If they command us
" to do any thing contrary to God's command-
" ment, in ſuch a caſe we ought to ſay with the
" Apoſtle, *we muſt rather obey God than man;*
" but nevertheleſs, in that caſe, *we may not, in*
" *any wiſe, withſtand violently, or rebel, againſt ru-*
" *lers, or make any inſurrection, ſedition, or tumults,*
" *either by force of arms or otherwiſe, againſt the*
" *anointed of the Lord, or any of his appointed officers;*

" *but*

" *but we muſt, in ſuch caſe, patiently ſuffer all wrongs* " *and injuries, referring the judgment of our cauſe* " *only to God.*" Other extracts might be made to the like effect; the homily againſt diſobedience, and wilful rebellion, divided into three parts, has many paſſages in the ſame ſtrain. To give only one inſtance; the third part begins thus: " Ye have heard before, in this homily, of good " order and obedience, manifeſtly proved both " by ſcriptures and examples, that all ſubjects " are bounden to obey their magiſtrates, and *for* " *no cauſe to reſiſt, rebel, or make any ſedition againſt* " *them, yea, although they be wicked men.*"

One of theſe ſix homilies againſt rebellion is to be read on every fifth of November, if there be no ſermon; and on the 30th of January, the miniſter is to read the firſt or ſecond parts of the *homily againſt diſobedience and wilful rebellion*, or a ſermon of his own compoſing, *upon the ſame argument*. Moſt cordially do I agree with Mr. Burke in his remark, that " politics and the pulpit are terms that " have very little agreement;" and that " no ſound " ought to be heard in the church, but the healing " voice of Chriſtian charity." But when he ſuppoſes that Dr. Price has *revived* this pulpit ſtile, after ſo long a diſcontinuance, he ſurely forgets theſe orders of the rubric. Twice at leaſt in every year, for more than a century, from nearly ten thouſand pulpits (ſuppoſing all the clergy to be obedient to the law) have the doctrines of paſſive obedience and non-reſiſtance been preached to the

gaping

gaping multitude; and did a ſingle ſermon then, from a diſſenting preacher, enforcing thoſe principles which he thought (whether miſtakenly is not the queſtion) might be deduced from the glorious revolution, deſerve ſuch ſevere animadverſion? I grant that moſt ſurely "the church is a place where "one day's truce ought to be allowed to the "diſſenſions and animoſities of mankind." Let churchmen then repeal the acts by which the 30th of January and 29th of May are appointed for the preaching of *political* ſermons, and inculcating principles hoſtile to public liberty; but if they are ſtill to remain in force, I cannot think that the Throne or Church will be endangered by the Diſſenting Miniſters endeavouring, in their narrower ſphere, to prevent the ſpreading of the contagion, and cheriſh in their hearers an attachment to our happy conſtitution, and a hearty loyalty and affection to the Houſe of Hanover.

In the reign of Henry the Eighth (1536) certain injunctions were iſſued, by the firſt of which, all perſons having cure of ſouls were enjoined, ſo many times in the year, to preach againſt the uſurped power of the Pope, "and that the king's power "is, in his dominions, the higheſt power and po-"tentate under God; to whom all men, within "the ſame dominions, *by God's commandment*, owe "moſt loyalty and obedience, afore, and above "all other potentates on earth." This was continued, in the ſame words, in the injunctions of

1538,

1538, and in thoſe iſſued in the reign of Edward the Sixth (1547) and, with very little variation, in the injunctions of Queen Elizabeth, and the Canons of 1603, in the reign of James the Firſt.

A Convocation was called by King James the Firſt in 1602, and continued, by adjournments and prorogations, till 1610. The 33d canon of the firſt book, as given by Biſhop Overall, who had been prolocutor, has theſe words: "If any man "therefore ſhall affirm ——— that the rebellion "*againſt any king*, abſolute prince, or civil ma- "giſtrate, *for any cauſe whatſoever, is not a ſin* very "deteſtable in the ſight of God, and therefore by "all that fear the Lord to be eſchewed, becauſe it "ever tendeth to miſchief, and ſometimes to the "overthrow of the kingdom, principality, and coun- "try, where it is raiſed, he doth greatly erre."

The fourth canon of the ſecond book begins in theſe words, "Therefore if any man ſhall affirm, "under colour of any thing that is in the ſcriptures, "either that the deity of our Saviour Chriſt doth "not, ſince his reſurrection and aſcenſion, other- "wiſe execute the majeſty and glory thereof in his "humanity, than it did before his paſſion; or that "Chriſt, now in glory, is not actually the heir of "all things, as he is man ſo highly exalted, and "both king of kings, and lord of lords; or that "he now ſitting at the right hand of God, in glory "and majeſty, as he is man, hath made an altera- "tion in the manner of temporal government, "*ordained by himſelf long before, as he is God*; or "that now all the kingdoms in the world, being

"but

" but one kingdom in reſpect of himſelf, *he doth* " *not allow the diſtributing of that his one univerſal* " *kingdom into divers principalities and kingdoms,* " *to be ruled by ſo many kings, and* ABSOLUTE *princes* " *under him, &c. &c.* he doth greatly erre." And many other paſſages of the ſame kind might be ſelected.

The canons of 1640, though they never had the force of laws *ſo as to bind the laity*, yet ſhew the ſenſe of the clergy of the Church of England at that time. They were made and confirmed in full convocation of the clergy of the provinces both of Canterbury and York, and are ſtill more full and expreſs than the preceding paſſages. The firſt canon ſays, " that the moſt ſacred order of kings is of " divine right, being the ordinance of God him- " ſelf, founded in the prime laws of nature, and " clearly eſtabliſhed by expreſs texts, both of the " Old and New Teſtament; and for any perſon or " perſons to ſet up, maintain, or allow, in any " their ſaid realms or territories reſpectively, under " any pretence whatever, any independent, co- " active power, either papal or popular (directly " or indirectly) is to undermine their great royal " office, and cunningly to overthrow that moſt ſa- " cred office, which God hath eſtabliſhed, and is " treaſonable againſt God, as well as againſt the " king. *For ſubjects to bear arms againſt their kings,* " *offenſive or defenſive, upon any pretence whatſoever,* " *is at leaſt to reſiſt the powers, which are ordained* " *of God*; and though they do not invade, but

 " only

" only reſiſt, St. Paul tells them plainly, that they " ſhall receive to themſelves damnation."

Theſe extracts from the neceſſary doctrine and erudition for any chriſtian man, from the injunctions, canons, and homilies, are cotemporary interpreters of the rubrick. The prayer after the commandments runs thus: " So rule the heart of thy choſen " ſervant, our king and governor, that he, *know-* " *ing whoſe miniſter he is*, may above all things " ſeek thy honour and glory; and that we, and all " his ſubjects, duly *conſidering whoſe authority he* " *hath, may faithfully ſerve, honour, and humbly* " *obey him, in thee, and for thee, according to thy* " *bleſſed ordinance.*" In one of the prayers appointed to be uſed on the 30th of January, are theſe words: " We acknowledge it thine eſpecial " favour, that though for our many and great pro- " vocations, thou didſt ſuffer *thine anointed, bleſſed* " *king*, Charles the Firſt, this day to fall into the " hands of violent," &c. The ſame expreſſion occurs in the office for the 29th of May, to thank God for the reſtoration of the royal family.

In the form of prayer, with thankſgiving, for the 9th of September, 1683, for the diſcovery of the Ryehouſe Plot, is this paſſage: " Let us never for- " get how often and how wonderfully thou haſt " preſerved *thine anointed* and his people. Con- " tinue him a nurſing father to this thy church, and " a miniſter for good to all his people; and let us " and

" and all his ſubjects look upon him henceforth,
" *not only as the ordinance, but alſo as the gift of God,*
" promiſing and performing *in thee, and for thee,*
" all faithful duty and loyalty to him, and his heirs
" after him," &c.

King James the Second commanded, that the day on which he came to the throne (viz. 6th of February) ſhould be kept as a day of thankſgiving, by a proclamation, dated 23d of December, 1685, and the form of prayer compoſed for that day is in the following ſtrain:—" Grant, we beſeech thee,
" Almighty God, that our ſovereign lord the king,
" whom of thine eſpecial grace and favour thou
" haſt (as upon this day) *happily ſettled in the throne*
" *of ſupreme government over us,* being ſtrengthened
" and eſtabliſhed with thy free and princely ſpirit,
" the ſpirit of counſel and ghoſtly ſtrength, the
" ſpirit of knowledge and true godlineſs, and being
" filled with the ſpirit of thy holy fear, may be
" always a religious defender of thy holy faith and
" church among us, a gracious governor unto all
" his ſubjects, a glorious conqueror over all his
" enemies, a mighty protector of the people com-
" mitted to his charge, and a happy father of a
" numerous poſterity, *to rule theſe nations after him*
" *by ſucceſſion in all ages and generations*; and grant
" alſo, gracious Lord, that we, and all his ſub-
" jects, both of this kingdom, and in all other his
" dominions, duly conſidering *that there is no power*
" *but of God, and that the powers that be, are or-*
" *dained of God, may be ſubject and obedient to him,*
" *not only for wrath, but alſo for conſcience ſake,* and

" ſo may long enjoy, together with him, the con-
" tinuance of theſe thy great bleſſings, which *by*
" *him thou doſt vouchſafe unto us.*"

In the year 1622, certain orders (dated the 4th of Auguſt) were ſent by the archbiſhops of Canterbury and York, with the king's conſent, to the ſeveral biſhops of their reſpective provinces. The fourth is, " That no preacher, of what title or de-
" nomination whatſoever, ſhall preſume from
" henceforth, in any auditory within this kingdom,
" *to declare, limit, or bound out, by way of poſitive*
" *doctrine, in any lecture or ſermon, the power, pre-*
" *rogative, juriſdiction, authority, or duty of ſove-*
" *reign princes,* and therein meddle with matters of
" ſtate, and reference between princes and people,
" than *as they are inſtructed in the homily of obedience,*
" *and in the reſt of the homilies, and articles of reli-*
" *gion, ſet forth by public authority.*" Theſe orders were again renewed in the reign of Charles the Second, and James the Second; and in the articles of Archbiſhop Sancroft, (July 16, 1688) immediately before the revolution, the clergy were enjoined in their ſermons, four times at leaſt in the year, to teach the people, " that the king's power
" being in his dominions higheſt under God, all
" prieſts ſhould, upon all occaſions, perſuade the
" people to loyalty, *and obedience to his majeſty, in*
" *all things lawful, and to patient ſubmiſſion in the*
" *reſt,* promoting, as far as in them lies, the public
" peace and quiet of the world."

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In the year 1622, one Knight, preaching at St. Peter's in the Eaſt, at Oxford, on Palm-Sunday, maintained in his ſermon the lawfulneſs of reſiſtance, for the ſake of religion. For this he was ſent by the vice-chancellor to priſon, and, by the king's order, afterwards to Weſtminſter, where he was confined in the gate-houſe for two years. Knight had defended himſelf by the authority of Paré, whoſe works the univerſity of Oxford cenſured in full convocation, by a decree of the 25th of June, 1622. Among others, they cenſured this propoſition, "that ſubjects, not private perſons, but infe-" rior magiſtrates, may take arms to defend them-" ſelves, the commonwealth, the church and true " religion, againſt their ſovereign or the ſuperior " magiſtrates, upon theſe conditions: if—1. The " prince turn tyrant.—2. If he compel his ſubjects " to commit idolatry, or blaſpheme.—3. When " any great injury is done.—4. If they cannot " otherwiſe be ſafe in their fortunes, their lives and " conſciences, provided they do not ſeek their own " advantage, and their arms be managed with " much moderation." This propoſition was cen-ſured as "falſe and ſeditious, and ſo craftily reſtrain-" ed under ſuch conditions annexed, as every ſedi-" tious perſon may make uſe of to vindicate him-" ſelf." Paré's work was burnt in the church-yard of St. Mary, in Oxford, and at St. Paul's, in Lon-don; and at Cambridge, not only Paré's book, but certain writings of Bucanus, and Junius Brutus, were committed to the flames. The univerſity of Oxford did not content itſelf with cenſuring Paré's

book, but alſo decreed and declared, "that, ac-
"cording to the canon of the holy ſcriptures, ſub-
"jects ought by no means forcibly to reſiſt their
"prince; and that *it is not lawful to take arms,*
"*either offenſive or defenſive, againſt the king, upon*
"*the account of religion, or any other pretence.*"
All the members of the convocation were required to ſign the decree, and all perſons admitted to degrees, to take an oath to conſent to the determinations of the convocation.

In 1647 (June) the univerſity of Oxford met in convocation, to declare their judgment concerning the ſolemn league and covenant, &c. Among their reaſons, drawn up by Biſhop Saunderſon, are found the following:

"We are not ſatisfied that our endeavour to pre-
"ſerve or defend the king's majeſty's perſon and
"authority is ſo limited, as there it is (in the third
"article in the covenant) by that addition; namely,
"*in the preſervation and defence of the true religion*
"*and liberties of the kingdom.* For as much as—
"1. No ſuch limitation of our duty in that behalf
"is to be found, either in the oaths of ſupremacy
"and allegiance, (which no Papiſt could refuſe
"to take with ſuch a limitation) nor in the pro-
"teſtation, nor in the word of God. —— 3. *Such*
"*limitation leaveth the duty of the ſubject at ſo much*
"*looſeneſs, and the ſafety of the king at ſo great uncer-*
"*tainty, that whenſoever the people ſhall have a mind*
"*to withdraw their obedience, they cannot want a pre-*
"*tence from the ſame for ſo doing.* And again, eſpe-
"cially being told in a late pamphlet, that the king

"not

" not having preſerved the liberties of the king-
" dom, &c. as of duty he ought, is thereby be-
" come a tyrant, and ſo ceaſeth to be a king; and
" conſequently, that his ſubjects ceaſe to be ſub-
" jects, and owe him no longer ſubjection. *Which*
" *aſſertion, ſince we heartily deteſt, as falſe and ſcan-*
" *dalous in the ſuppoſition, and in the inference ſeditious*
" *and deviliſh, we dare not, by ſubſcribing this article,*
" *ſeem to give the leaſt countenance thereunto.*"

The addreſs of the univerſity of Cambridge, preſented on September 18, 1681, by Dr. Gower, then vice-chancellor, to the king at Newmarket, runs thus: " But no earthly power, (we hope) no
" menaces or miſery, ſhall ever be able to make us
" renounce or forget our duty. We will ſtill be-
" lieve and maintain, that *our kings derive not their*
" *title from the people, but from God; that to him*
" *only they are accountable; that it belongs not to ſub-*
" *jects either to create or cenſure, but to honour and*
" *obey their ſovereign, who comes to be ſo by a*
" *fundamental, hereditary right of ſucceſſion, which*
" *no religion, no law, no fault or forfeiture, can alter*
" *or diminiſh.*"

July 21, 1683, in full convocation of the univerſity of Oxford, twenty-ſeven propoſitions, extracted from divers books, were, by unanimous aſſent and conſent, decreed and determined to be " repugnant
" to the holy ſcriptures, decrees of councils,
" writings of the fathers, the faith and profeſſion of
" the primitive church, and alſo deſtructive of the
" kingly government, the ſafety of his majeſty's
" perſon, the public peace, the laws of nature,

" and bond of human ſociety." Among other propoſitions were theſe :—" 1. All civil authority " is derived originally from the people.—2. There " is a mutual compact, tacit or expreſs, between " a prince and his ſubjects ; and if he perform not " his duty, they are diſcharged from their's.— " 3. That if lawful governors become tyrants, or " govern otherwiſe than by the laws of God and " man they ought to do, they forfeit the right they " had unto their government.—8. The doctrine " of the goſpel concerning patient ſuffering of in- " juries, is not inconſiſtent with violent reſiſting " of the higher powers, in caſe of perſecution for " religion.—9. There lies no obligation upon " chriſtians to paſſive obedience, when the prince " commands any thing againſt the law of our " country ; and the primitive chriſtians choſe ra- " ther to die than to reſiſt, becauſe chriſtianity was " not yet ſettled by the laws of the empire."

The whole twenty-ſeven propoſitions, and " all " and every " of them, were adjudged " to be falſe, " ſeditious, and impious ; and moſt of them to be " alſo heretical, and blaſphemous, infamous to the " chriſtian religion, and deſtructive of all govern- " ment in church and ſtate." Moreover, the books of Milton, Baxter, Goodwin, Owen, Johnſon, &c. containing theſe reprobated doctrines, were ordered to be publicly burnt in the court of the public ſchools, as books fitted to deprave good manners, ſtir up ſedition and tumults, overthrow ſtates and kingdoms, and lead to rebellion, murder of princes, and atheiſm itſelf ; and the reading

of

of thoſe books was forbidden, under penalties. Nor was this all; for in perpetual memory of the decree, it was ordered to be entered in the regiſtry of the convocation, and to be ſtuck up in the different colleges and halls. And all readers, tutors, catechiſts, and others, to whom the care and truſt of initiating youth was committed, were commanded diligently "to inſtruct and ground their ſcholars in "*that moſt neceſſary doctrine, which in a manner is the* "*badge and character of the Church of England**, "*of ſubmitting to every ordinance of man for the* "*Lord's ſake, whether it be to the king as ſupreme,* "*or unto governors, as unto them that are ſent by him* "*for the puniſhment of evil-doers, and for the praiſe* "*of them that do well. Teaching that this ſubmiſſion* "*and obedience is to be clear, abſolute, and without* "*any exception of any ſtate, or order of men.*"

The decree was drawn up by Dr. Jane, dean of Glouceſter, and the king's profeſſor of divinity, and ſubſcribed by the whole convocation. It was pre-

* Lake, Biſhop of Chicheſter (one of the ſeven biſhops that were ſent to the Tower by King James the Second) on his death-bed, when his diſſolution approached, received the ſacrament, and, at that awful moment, with the utmoſt ſolemnity, made this profeſſion, which he ſigned in the preſence of five witneſſes. "Whereas *the religion of the Church of England taught me the* "*doctrine of non-reſiſtance and paſſive obedience*, which I have ac- "cordingly inculcated upon others, and which I took to be *the* "*diſtinguiſhing character of the Church of England*, I adhere no "leſs firmly and ſtedfaſtly to that; and in conſequence of it, "have incurred a ſuſpenſion from the exerciſe of my office, and "expected a deprivation. I find in ſo doing much inward ſatiſ- "faction; and if the oath had been tendered at the peril of my "life, I could have only obeyed by ſuffering."

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ſented to the king with great ſolemnity, on the 24th of July following, and very graciouſly received.

Well might Mr. Locke tell king William very plainly, "that if the univerſities were not reformed, "and other principles taught there than had been "formerly inculcated, they would either deſtroy "him, or ſome of his ſucceſſors, or both *." We all know how little was wanting in the next reign, to the completion of this prophecy.

If further proofs were required of the ſlaviſh principles of the Church of England from the reformation to the revolution, they might be furniſhed in abundance from the writings of the clergy. And it is not leſs extraordinary than true, that even thoſe who took the moſt active part in favour of the revolution, were in their early days tainted, more or leſs, by theſe arbitrary maxims. Among others may be reckoned Tillotſon, Tenniſon, Stillingfleet, Patrick, and even Burnet himſelf: nor is this ſurpriſing; for every perſon in holy

* Life of Locke, prefixed to his Works, 1777, p. 26.
Biſhop Burnet alſo obſerved, that "in thoſe ſeats of education, "inſtead of being formed to love their country and conſtitu-"tution, and the laws and liberties of it, they are rather diſ-"poſed to love arbitrary government, and to become ſlaves to "abſolute monarchy." At length, however, there is ſome hope of a reformation, for the univerſity of Oxford has lately refuſed the honour of a degree to Mr. Burke, the aſſertor of the rights of kings, though in the reign of James the Second they conferred it on a Mahometan.

orders was obliged, by the Act of Uniformity, ſolemnly to declare (nearly in the words I have before recited out of the "Erudition of a Chriſtian "man") that "it is not lawful upon any pretence "whatſoever to take arms againſt the king," &c.* —With a body of clergymen, who had been preaching for 150 years the doctrines of ſlaviſh obedience to rulers, and who were bound by the moſt ſolemn engagements to ſupport it; with the corporations of England new modelled by the court; and many of their members, and the whole militia† of the kingdom ſworn to maintain the doctrines of paſſive obedience and non-reſiſtance, it ſeems little leſs than a miraculous interpoſition of divine providence, which preſerved ſo many of the clergy and

* This part of the declaration was taken away by 1 W. and M. c. viii. ſ. 11; and as far as the *State* is concerned, the clergy are at liberty to preach up reſiſtance to tyrants. But alas! the principles of the Church are as hoſtile to liberty as ever.

† By the Corporation Act all perſons were to be turned out by the commiſſioners that did not take the oath of paſſive obedience; and by the Militia Act all the officers of that corps were alſo obliged to take it. The act mentioned in the foregoing note, repealed ſo much of the Militia Act as impoſed this oath; and this part of the Corporation Act expired long before the revolution. In the year 1675, an attempt was made to oblige all perſons holding offices, whether eccleſiaſtical, civil, or military, privy counſellors, and members of either houſe of parliament, to take a ſimilar oath, with a clauſe (copied from the Five-mile Act) not to attempt any alteration in the government, either of the Church or State; and after a debate of ſixteen days, a bill for that purpoſe paſſed the Houſe of Lords, but was loſt by the diſpute which ſoon afterwards took place between the two Houſes.

laity

laity from the contagion of their church, and in ſpite of their earlieſt prejudices and engagements, made them at the revolution zealous aſſertors of civil liberty *. Even ſo late as in the Convention Parliament, the Biſhops endeavoured to obſtruct, in the Houſe of Lords, every attempt of the Commons to ſettle the conſtitution; and at length, when it was carried to agree with the Commons, and retain the word "abdicated," and vote that the throne was become vacant, no leſs than twelve, out of the ſixteen Biſhops who were then preſent, entered their proteſts †. Thus, as has been juſtly obſerved, the ſtanding army of James ſhewed a greater attachment to liberty than the prelates of the Church. Should theſe pages by chance fall into the hands of Mr. Burke, will he ſtill think that his prejudice in favour of a Church which teaches the perſecution of men for religious opinions, and paſſive obedience to rulers, "is not a prejudice deſti-" tute of reaſon, but involving in it profound and

* Sacheverell, in his Sermon, thus abuſes thoſe who diſavowed the principles of his Church: "In a word, to accompliſh any "wretched ſecular deſign, to gratify their pride or ambition, to "feed their luſt or avarice, to wreak their ſpleen or revenge, "out of envy or diſappointment, for a little paltry honour, money, "or preferment, theſe falſe brethren will renounce their creed, "and read the decalogue backward; be the very reverſe of our "bleſſed Saviour (whom like their primitive pattern they firſt "fell and then betray), fall down and worſhip the very devil "himſelf, for the riches and honours of this world." The Diſſenters could not complain much of his ill uſage, when he thus treated the members of his own Church.

† Lord's Journals, vol. xiv. p. 19.

"extenſive

" extenſive wiſdom?" Such a prejudice may be expected to prevail among High Churchmen, in whoſe minds the Church is " firſt, and laſt, and " midſt;" but it may be fairly preſumed that Mr. Burke is the only perſon aſſuming the character of a *Whig*, who, ſince the revolution, has hugged this prejudice ſo cloſely to his boſom.

Since the revolution no alterations have been made in the articles, canons, or homilies; they are now in force, and ſubſcribed, as before that glorious æra, and the rubric remains unreformed, and in daily uſe, ſo that in direct oppoſition to the genius of the Britiſh monarchy, paſſive obedience and non-reſiſtance are *ſtill* the doctrines of the Church. That their operation on the minds of the clergy was not wholly deſtroyed by the revolution, this kingdom has felt by ſad experience. Thoſe machinations, which ſhook the throne for four ſucceſſive reigns, and ripened into two rebellions againſt the princes of the Houſe of Hanover, were chiefly fomented and carried on by High Churchmen.

On the 16th of May, 1702, the Houſe of Lords found themſelves called upon to cenſure the moſt extraordinary ſermon that perhaps ever diſgraced the eſtabliſhed pulpits, even on a 30th of January. It had been publiſhed, and intituled, A Sermon " preached on January the 30th, 1701-2, in King " Henry the Seventh's Chapel, before the reverend " Clergy of the Lower Houſe of Convocation, by " W. Binckes, D. D. a Proctor for the Dioceſs " of

" of Litchfield and Coventry." The following paragraphs were read in the houſe:

" And firſt, as to the near reſemblance between " the parties concerned, as well the actors as the " ſufferers, comparing thoſe in the text with thoſe " of the day. And here one would imagine the " latter were reſolved to take St. Paul's expreſ- " ſion in the moſt literal ſenſe the words will bear, " and crucify to themſelves the Lord afreſh, and, " in the neareſt likeneſs that could be, put him " to an open ſhame. If with reſpect to the dignity " of the perſon, to have been born King of the " Jews was what ought to have ſkreened our " Saviour from violence, here is alſo one, not only " born to a crown, but actually poſſeſſed of it. He " was not only called King by ſome, and at the ſame " time derided by others for being ſo called, but he " was acknowledged by all to be a King. He was " not juſt dreſſed up for an hour or two in purple " robes, and ſaluted with a Hail, King! but the " uſual ornaments of Majeſty were his cuſtomary " apparel. His ſubjects owned him to be their " King, and yet they brought him before a tribunal. " They judged him; they condemned him; and, " that they might not be wanting in any thing to " ſet him at naught, they ſpit upon him, and treat- " ed him with the utmoſt contempt. Our Sa- " viour's declaring, that his kingdom was not of this " world, might look like a ſort of renunciation of " his temporal ſovereignty for the preſent, deſiring " only to reign in the hearts of men. But here " was nothing of this in the caſe before us; here

" was

" was *an indiſputable unrenounced right of ſovereignty,*
" *both by the laws of God and men. He was the*
" *reigning prince, and the Lord's anointed*; and
" yet, in deſpite of all law, both human and divine,
" he was, by direct force of arms, and the moſt
" daring methods of a flagrant rebellion and vio-
" lence, deprived at once of his imperial crown
" and life.

" The fact of this day was ſuch a vying with the
" firſt arch rebel, the apoſtate Lucifer; it was ſuch
" going beyond the old ſerpent, in his own way of
" inſolence and pride, that it is no wonder if he
" then began to raiſe his head, and ſet up for
" dominion in this world, when thus warmed and
" enlivened by a fiery zeal in ſome, and rage in
" others, to the degree of drunkenneſs, thirſting
" after and ſatiating themſelves in royal blood, and
" in which reſpect only, heated to the degree of
" frenzy and madneſs, the plea in my text may
" ſeem to have ſome hold of them, 'Father for-
" give them, for they know not what they do'."

Notwithſtanding its author had received the *thanks of the Lower Houſe of Convocation* for this ſermon, the Houſe of Lords made no ſcruple to cenſure the book, and vote that in it " there are " ſeveral expreſſions that give juſt ſcandal and of-" fence to all chriſtian people;" but a motion that the ſermon ſhould be burnt (as had been done juſt before with ſome animadverſions upon it) was negatived; it was however ordered that the vote * of

* Lord's Journals, vol. xvii. p. 131.

cenſure

cenſure ſhould be communicated to the Lord Biſhop of Litchfield and Coventry.

Dr. Sacheverell preached a ſermon before the lord mayor and aldermen of London, on the 5th of Nov. 1709 (which, at their requeſt, he printed) containing the following paſſages:—

"The grand ſecurity of our government, and "the very pillar upon which it ſtands, is founded "upon the ſteady belief of the ſubject's obligation "to *an abſolute and unconditional obedience to the ſu-* "*preme power in all things lawful, and the utter* "*illegality of reſiſtance upon any pretence whatſoever.*" But this fundamental doctrine, notwithſtanding "its divine ſanction in the expreſs command of "God in ſcripture, and without which it is im-"poſſible any government of any kind or deno-"mination in the world ſhould ſubſiſt with ſafety, "and *which has been ſo long the honourable and diſtin-* "*guiſhing characteriſtic of our Church*, is now, it "ſeems, quite exploded, and ridiculed out of "countenance, as an unfaſhionable, ſuperannuated, "nay (which is more wonderful) as a dangerous "tenet, utterly inconſiſtent with the right, liberty, "and property of the people, who, *as our new* "*preachers and new politicians teach us* (*I ſuppoſe by* "*a new and unheard of Goſpel, as well as laws*) *have,* "*in contradiction to both, the power inveſted in them,* "*the fountain and original of it, to cancel their al-* "*legiance at pleaſure, and call their ſovereign to ac-* "*count for high treaſon againſt his ſupreme ſubjects*

"*forſooth*;

" *forſooth*; *nay, to dethrone and murder him for a*
" *criminal, as they did the royal martyr, by a judiciary*
" *ſentence*; and what is almoſt incredible, preſume
" to make their court to their prince, by maintain-
" ing ſuch *antimonarchical* ſchemes. But, God be
" thanked! *neither the conſtitution of our church or*
" *ſtate is ſo far altered, but that by the laws of both*
" (ſtill in force, and which I hope for ever will be)
" *theſe damnable poſitions, let them come either from*
" *Rome or Geneva, from the pulpit or the preſs, are*
" *condemned for rebellion and high treaſon. Our ad-*
" *verſaries think they effectually ſtop our mouths, and*
" *have us ſure and unanſwerable on this point, when*
" *they urge the revolution of this day in their defence.*
" But certainly they are the greateſt enemies of
" that, and his late majeſty, and the moſt ungrate-
" ful for the deliverance, who endeavour to caſt
" ſuch *black* and *odious* colours upon both. How
" often muſt they be told, that the king himſelf
" ſolemnly diſclaimed the leaſt imputation of re-
" ſiſtance in his declaration.——We ſee how ready
" theſe incendiaries are to take the leaſt umbrage,
" to charge *their own curſed tenets* on the Church of
" England, to derive their guilt upon it, and quit
" ſcores with it for their iniquity! Thus do they
" endeavour to draw compariſons, and to juſtify
" the horrid actions and principles of forty-one,
" which have been of late years, to the ſcandal of
" our church and nation, ſo publicly defended, not
" only by the agents and writers of the *republican*
" *faction*, but by ſome that have the confidence
" to ſtile themſelves *ſons*, and *preſbyters of the Church*

" *of England*; who, *in open defiance of the moſt peremptory declarations of God in ſcripture* (never to be evaded by any ſhifts or miſinterpretations) *and the univerſal doctrine and expoſitions of the Catholic Church upon it in all ages, with the expreſs teſtimony and concurrence of our Church, from its reformation down to the preſent time, corroborated with the ſenſe of our legiſlature, ſo unexceptionably confirmed in our laws, dare, in deſpight and contempt of all this evidence, manifeſtly defend the reſiſtance of the ſupreme power*, under a new-fangled notion of ſelf-defence; the only inſtance they ſhew of ſhame, that they dare not YET maintain rebellion by its proper name; yet if thoſe ſilly pretences, and weak excuſes for it alledged, carry any ſtrength or reaſon in them at all, they will equally ſerve to juſtify all the rebellions that ever were or can be committed in the world. Now, as the Republicans copy after the Papiſts in moſt of their doctrines and practices, I would fain know in this where the difference lies, betwixt the power granted to (as 'tis ſuppoſed originally inveſted, but from what commiſſion God knows, in) the people to judge and dethrone their ſovereigns, *for any cauſe they think fit*, or a no leſs uſurped power of the pope to ſolve the people from their allegiance, and diſpoſe of ſceptres and diadems to his favourites, whenever he thinks it *his intereſt* to pluck them from his enemies heads. *Such villainous and ſeditious principles* as theſe demand a confutation from that government they ſo inſolently threaten and arraign, and which

" are

" are *only proper to be anſwered by that ſword they* " *would make our princes bear in vain, by the ſo long-* " *called for cenſure of an eccleſiaſtical ſynod, and the* " *correction of a provoked and affronted legiſlature*; to " whoſe ſtrict juſtice, and undeſerved mercy, I " commit both them and their authors."

Theſe paſſages made the ground-work of the *firſt* article of his impeachment.

When his trial came on, this intemperate zeal for the arbitrary power of the crown was inſtantaneouſly communicated, like an electric ſhock, to every part of the kingdom; the eſtabliſhed clergy being already prepared to act as conductors. He was attended to Weſtminſter Hall by one hundred of that body. *His cauſe*, Dean Swift tells us, was taken up as the cauſe of the Church, and the whole ſacred order was underſtood to be concerned. In return, he defended himſelf by the authority of the Church, and the practice of its members. In one part of his defence he ſays:

" The ſaid Henry Sacheverell doth, with all " humility, aver the illegality of reſiſtance *on any* " *pretence whatſoever*, to be the doctrine of the " Church of England, and to have been the moſt " general opinion of our moſt orthodox and able " divines from the time of the reformation to " this day: this doctrine hath, in the moſt ſolemn " manner, been taught in that univerſity, where- " of he hath been for more than thirty years " a member; this hath been often, with public " approbation of each Houſe of Parliament, preach- " ed and printed; and in terms of greater force

" than any uſed by the ſaid Henry Sacheverell, " hath, by the right reverend fathers of our " Church, dead and living, been avowed and " maintained."

Sacheverell was by the Lords enjoined not to preach during the term of three years, and his two printed ſermons, referred to by the impeachment, were ordered to be burnt by the common hangman. And the Houſe of Lords, taking into conſideration the judgment and decree of the univerſity of Oxford, paſſed in their convocation the 21ſt of July, 1683, given in evidence on the trial, and thereupon lately reprinted, reſolved, that it contained in it "*ſeveral poſitions contrary to the conſtitution of* " *this kingdom, and deſtructive to the Proteſtant ſuc-* " *ceſſion, as by law eſtabliſhed*;" and it was thereupon ordered that it ſhould be burnt at the ſame time by the common hangman.

But even in our own time, during the American war, my readers may recollect how violent many of the clergy of the eſtabliſhment were againſt the coloniſts, and that ſermons were preached, even by the higheſt dignitaries, couched in the moſt abject terms of courtly ſervility, and inculcating doctrines equally ſubverſive of liberty on both ſides of the Atlantic.

In one inſtance, theſe faſhionable, but dangerous, tenets did fortunately meet with a check, and Churchmen were taught that the members of the Britiſh Senate were not to look for the principles of the conſtitution in their homilies or articles.

On

On the 30th of January, 1772, Dr. Nowell, Principal of St. Mary Hall, in the Univerſity of Oxford, preached a ſermon before the Houſe of Commons, in which was the following paſſage: "When men conſider themſelves placed in their "ſeveral ſubordinate ſtations, not by meer chance, "or by any compact or agreement of their own "framing; but by the will of him who is the "fountain of government, the ſupreme Lord of "heaven and earth; when they conſider that *all* "*authority, dominion, and power, are his prerogative, and derived from him to thoſe whom his providence has delegated to be his repreſentatives upon* "*earth*; cheerful duty and willing obedience will "be the natural reſult of ſuch reflections. To minds "under this perſuaſion, the ordinances of man will "recommend themſelves to be, what they really "are, the *ordinances of God*; and the magiſtrate, "*under this character*, will appear venerable and "awful, *as the miniſter of God.*"

The Houſe of Commons, as a matter of courſe, thanked him for this ſermon on the day after it was preached, and requeſted that he would print it. Unluckily for the Doctor, he acceded to the requeſt; for when it was diſcovered that, however conſiſtent his principles might be with the doctrines of his Church, they were totally ſubverſive of the preſent government, it was deemed neceſſary to paſs a gentle cenſure on the preacher, as a hint to thoſe who might occupy his pulpit in future. Accordingly, on the 25th of February, 1772, a motion was made for expunging the thanks, thus precipitately

given, from the Journals, and it was carried by 152 votes to 41.

Dr. Powell, in the firſt of his ſermons, publiſhed in 1776, ſpeaks of "abſurd and ſlaviſh principles "of government, which now are fled into ever-"laſting darkneſs," and obſerves, that "they left "their *laſt* footſteps before the altars of God, and "in the faireſt temples of literature;" evidently alluding to the univerſity of Oxford. It is to be obſerved, that Dr. Powell was a member of the univerſity of Cambridge, where ſome degree of liberality of ſentiment prevails. How little he knew of the univerſity of Oxford may be inferred from the following paſſage, extracted from the faſt-ſermon, preached by Dr. Miles Newton, before the univerſity of Oxford, in the year after the obſervation was made. Alluding to the doctrines of original compacts, power derived from the people, and the lawfulneſs of reſiſtance, he ſays, "ſuch wild, vi-"ſionary, enthuſiaſtic notions, have always been "counteracted and oppoſed by the examples and "*inſtructions* of this univerſity, which may, without "vanity, boaſt, that it has been ſteadier in its "principles, and ſuffered more for its conſiſtency, "in the ſupport of regal government, than per-"haps any other place of the like nature in the "chriſtian world *."

One obvious inference from theſe inſtances, as well as from the late reſolutions and conduct of the

* The Extracts from Dr. Powell's and Dr. Newton's ſermons, are taken from "Sylva; or the Wood:" the 2nd Edit. p. 172.

clergy

clergy is, that the ſpiritual poiſon, which operated with deadly effect before the revolution, has not yet loſt its effect, and that the reformation of one, at leaſt, of the univerſities (as recommended by Mr. Locke) is ſtill wanting. It is a moſt ſerious conſideration, that the youth of our moſt illuſtrious families ſhould, at their entrance into life, be obliged to declare (as the condition of being permitted to begin their courſe of education) that paſſive obedience and non-reſiſtance are godly and wholeſome doctrines, and then ſhould be left in the care of thoſe, by whom the principles of liberty muſt be, at beſt, but feebly inculcated.

CHAPTER V.

The Intolerant Principles on which the Teſt Laws are defended, ſtated and anſwered; and the Proteſtant Diſſenters ſhewn to be friendly to the Church.

ONE accidental gleam of truth illuminated the Reviewer in writing the following paſſage: "The light of knowledge, like the light natural, "ſpreads itſelf by an inherent force of expanſion; "nor is it poſſible that the one, more than the "other, ſhould be confined to the ſpot where the "blaze is firſt kindled. It is not, therefore, in the "Proteſtant Church only, that the intellect of man "hath been for two centuries or more in an im-"proving ſtate. Liberty of conſcience hath its "advocates, even among the Roman clergy. The "Conclave, indeed, hath not yet renounced its de-"teſtable maxims." This obſervation reſpecting the conclave may be retorted on the Church of England. Among *her clergy*, it is true, that liberty of conſcience hath her advocates; but if any judgment may be formed of their numbers, from certain late reſolutions, writings, and tranſactions, they are not very conſiderable. As the progreſs of learning, after having reached many individuals of the Roman clergy, has not, according to the Reviewer, reformed the doctrines of the conclave, ſo neither

neither has it reformed thoſe of the Church of England. The ſame doctrines, the ſame diſcipline, that were eſtabliſhed in the infancy of learning, diſgrace her, after the intellect of man (that is, of other men) has been improving for more than two centuries. The clergy may be tolerant, but the Church is ſtill a perſecutor. And thus, in a Proteſtant country, a ſtriking inſtance is exhibited, that an eſtabliſhment, from not having advanced in improvement with the intellect of man, and been perfected from time to time according to the lights of each ſucceeding age, may at laſt hold doctrines hoſtile to the ſtate, with which ſome whimſical theoriſts ſuppoſe it to be in alliance, and tenets which moſt of its clergy would think it diſgraceful to avow. In England, the improved reaſon of the Catholics has taught *them* to deſpiſe the perſecuting maxims of the eſtabliſhed Church, and to pity the bigotry of their Proteſtant countrymen.

It is obvious, that under a Church claiming a divine origin, and aſſuming the poſſeſſion of all *truth*, Nonconformiſts cannot be permitted to enjoy any degree of toleration as a *right*. And upon this principle, nothing would be more eaſy than to anſwer all the arguments that ever were, or ever can be urged, for the repeal of the Teſt Laws. The misfortune is, that as the world grew more enlightened, the principle was diſputed, and churchmen in general became aſhamed to avow it. Here I muſt except the wiſe corporation of Leiceſter, who retain the old-faſhioned maxim of their Church, and when the repeal of the Teſt Laws was lately

lately under conſideration, reſolved, "That con-
"ſcientious men have the ſtrongeſt of all poſſible
"motives to ſupport and extend their own party;
"namely, the ſuppoſition that they alone are in
"poſſeſſion of the *truth*." And Biſhop Horſley, who ſtill holds it to be erroneous, nay *ſinful*, for men to think for themſelves in matters of religion: In his charge to the clergy of his dioceſe, delivered at his primary viſitation in 1790, having mentioned Dr. Prieſtley and Mr. Lindſey, as examples of moral rectitude among the diſciples of infidelity and atheiſm, he adds, "But let not the
"morality of their lives be miſtaken for a righteous
"practice reſulting from a perverſe faith, or ad-
"mitted as an argument of the indifference of error.
"Their moral works, if they be not done as God
"hath willed and commanded ſuch works to be
"done, have the nature of ſin; and their religion,
"conſiſting *in private opinion* and will-worſhip, *is*
"*ſin*, for it is *hereſy*." So that to exerciſe the right of private judgment, and embrace any religious opinions, but thoſe eſtabliſhed by law*; to adopt any ſtandard of faith but that ſanctioned by the church, is *ſinful!* Could Biſhop Horſley aſſert in ſtronger terms the infallibility of the eſtabliſhment? *Ex ungue leonem.* This proteſtant biſhop ſeems to have applied the popiſh principle to the moral works of theſe unfortunate men, *Lutherani & Cal-*

* The Abbot of Weſtminſter preſſed Sir Thomas More, that however the matter appeared to him, he might ſee his conſcience was erroneous, *ſince the great council of the realm was of another mind, and therefore he ought to change his conſcience.* Burnet's Hiſt. of the Reformation, vol. i. p. 150.

viniſtæ

viniſtæ a Deo, & eccleſia, tanquam pernicioſiſſimi heretici declarati, non magis etiam cum vera dicunt, audiendi ſunt, quam diabolus *.

Of late, however, the champions of clerical uſurpation have thought it *more prudent* to take another ground, but with little advantage. The formal recommendation, by the Reviewer, of SHERLOCK and WARBURTON, as elementary writers upon the ſubject of the Teſt Laws, ſhews the diſtreſſed condition of the argument; for they proceed upon principles totally repugnant to each other. With equal propriety might he have recommended *Deſcartes* and *Newton*, as elementary writers in philoſophy; *Filmer* and *Locke*, on the ſubject of government; or *Horſley* and *Prieſtley*, on the Trinity. Biſhop Sherlock's treatiſe was written while the act againſt occaſional conformity was in force, with a view to ſhew that the total *excluſion* of all Nonconformiſts from offices was the object of the Teſt and Corporation Acts. But the legiſlature, by the repeal of the act againſt occaſional conformity (ſoon after Sherlock's book was publiſhed) unfortunately confuted his arguments by a legiſlative declaration, that that excluſion was not intended to be *total*. Beſides, Biſhop Sherlock proceeded upon the generally exploded, though ſtill eſtabliſhed ſyſtem, of all truth being confined to the eſtabliſhed Church, and thoſe who diſſented, being in error; and "ſupported a Teſt Law on ſuch reaſoning as

* Maldonat. Comment. in Matth. xvi. ver. vi.

"deſtroyed

" deſtroyed a toleration *." Biſhop Hoadley entered the liſts on behalf of the Diſſenters, and ſucceſsfully maintained the right of private judgment. The conduct of Biſhop Sherlock himſelf, ſufficiently proves that *he* felt no reaſon to boaſt of the event of this controverſy; for, in his riper years, he diſapproved of his own performance, and never would permit this " firſt of controverſial writings," to be printed with his other works †. How far the republication of a work, with which the author himſelf was diſſatisfied, is juſtifiable to the public, or reſpectful to the Biſhop's memory, may be left to High Churchmen to determine.

Upon the diſcomfiture of Sherlock, Biſhop Warburton took up the ruined cauſe. He admitted that an eſtabliſhment was not defenſible on the footing of its truth, but of its *public utility*; ſo far his ſyſtem was more rational that his predeceſſor's; and ſo far too " even republicans" might agree with him. The outline of his ſcheme was borrowed from popiſh writers; who, claiming for their Church not merely independence of, but ſuperiority over, the civil power, ſuppoſe an alliance to have been made between them. It was not eaſy to adapt that hypotheſis to an eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhment

* Theſe are the words of Biſhop Warburton, in the poſtſcript to " The Alliance between Church and State," in anſwer to Lord Bolingbroke.

† Biogr. Britt. vol. vi. part ii. art. *Sherlock*; and ſee his life prefixed to the 6th Edit. of his Diſcourſes, publiſhed in 1772.

created

created by, and in conſtant dependence on, the ſtate. The abſurdity of the attempt, however, ſtimulated the projecting brain of Warburton, and the awkward manner in which the tattered ſyſtem was made to hang together, did not prevent its favourable reception among the deſpairing bigots of the Church. The treatiſe upon the alliance between Church and State has been an object of ridicule among the unprejudiced and liberal; but with the Reviewer and his party it is ſtill applauded as "one of the fineſt pieces of ſcientific reaſoning "applied to a political ſubject."

It is impoſſible to avoid making an obſervation here, upon the difficulties to which High Churchmen have been driven to ſupport their favourite Teſt Laws. Sherlock honeſtly maintained the right of the ſtate to impoſe them, upon ſuch principles as his Church afforded him. Warburton felt the weakneſs of his arguments, and entered into a train of "ſcientific reaſoning," which nothing but deſpair could have ſuggeſted, and which, if admitted to be concluſive, would effectually overthrow all pretenſions to a preference on behalf of the Church *as now* eſtabliſhed: for it reſts its claim on being made by the ſtate the depoſitary of religious truth, while Warburton aſſerts that every Church eſtabliſhment muſt depend upon an alliance with the ſtate, founded only on its being the religion of the majority *, and at the ſame time, ſovereign and independent

* Warburton's theory might be, in ſome degree, applicable to Scotland; for by the "Act aboliſhing prelacy," paſſed in 1689, "Prelacy is aboliſhed, and all Acts eſtabliſhing prelacy are

dent of the civil government. Again, the Church, as truth muſt be the ſame to day, to-morrow, and for ever, claims a right to *perpetual* eſtabliſhment, while, according to Warburton, the ſtate may caſt off this ally whenever the public utility requires it. And thus one of the moſt powerful and dangerous enemies of *the preſent* Church eſtabliſhment of England has been, by the Reviewer's penetration, diſtinguiſhed among the moſt zealous of its friends.

It is neceſſary to form ſome preciſe idea of what a Church is, before we can underſtand what is meant by its *alliance* with a State. Mr. Locke defines a Church to be, "a voluntary ſociety of men "joining themſelves together of their own accord, "in order to the public worſhipping of God, in "ſuch a manner as they judge acceptable to him, "and effectual to the ſalvation of their ſouls;" nor does Biſhop Warburton's definition ſeem to differ materially. Setting out with this definition, the hypotheſis of an alliance between a Church and State, neceſſarily implies that there can be no *eſſential* connection between them. For ſuppoſe that (as the Reviewer expreſſes it) "the world were "returned to that tumultuary ſtate, out of which, "as democratic politicians dream, civil ſociety "firſt aroſe, and out of that chaos of mankind new

"are reſcinded, caſſed, and annulled; and the King and Queen's "Majeſties did declare, that they, with aſſent and conſent of "the three eſtates of this parliament, will ſettle by law that "Church government in this kingdom, *which is moſt agreeable* "*to the inclinations of the people*," and upon that ground Preſbyterianiſm was afterwards eſtabliſhed.

"communities

"communities were to be created," thoſe communities muſt exiſt for a time without alliance with any Church whatever. Men enter into ſociety at firſt for the ſake of ſelf-preſervation, and the protection of their temporal concerns, and they muſt have opportunities to meet in ſafety, which ſociety only can afford, in order to communicate their religious opinions, and arrive at ſome harmony of ſentiment, before they can agree to form themſelves into a ſociety for public worſhip. The very exiſtence of a Church, therefore, preſuppoſes a civil government, without which *it* could never have had a being; but the civil government in no degree depends on the Church. In fact, tribes of ſavage people have been known to live under a rude kind of civil government, not only without any form of Church diſcipline among them, but even without any knowledge of, or belief in, the exiſtence of a God. How far the Church of Rome may form an exception is not the queſtion. Biſhop Warburton's "ſcientific reaſoning," perhaps, might there be applicable, but it does not therefore follow that it can apply to Proteſtant Churches, or Churches in general, any more than the demonſtration of a ſingle unconnected propoſition in Euclid can be made to govern every mathematical problem in his works.

However, according to Biſhop Warburton (but not according to the Reviewer, for *he* ſpeaks of the magiſtrate's *making* and *unmaking* a Church) ſome ſort of Church which had exiſted in the chaos of mankind, before ſocieties were formed, and which

of courſe was perfectly independent and unconnected, made an alliance with the civil government in which it happened to be found, exactly as between two independent nations. Upon his plan, the magiſtrate was in duty bound to ally with that Church, and eſtabliſh that religion which included the majority of his ſubjects. The Reviewer, more wary than the Biſhop, and having felt the preſſure of the argument drawn from the ſtate of Ireland, where the civil government has allied itſelf with a Church, which does not profeſs a religion acceptable to the majority, and which, therefore, according to the Biſhop's principles, is indefenſible*, tells us, that it is not univerſally true, that the magiſtrate is in all caſes to be determined in the choice of his ally *by the voice of the majority of the people*; but the fitneſs of one Church more than another, by its internal form, to unite with the civil conſtitution, is alſo to be conſidered. Here Warburton and his pupil are a little at variance; and it would not be difficult to ſhew that in this choice of abſurdities, Warburton's is the moſt unexceptionable ſyſtem.

We are told, however, that, fortunately in England, "not only the ſuperiority of ſtrength and "numbers, but *the advantage of aſſimilation to the* "*civil conſtitution*, is on the ſide of the eſtabliſhed

* In Ireland, the majority are obliged to contribute to the religion of the minority, and the minority exclude the majority from public offices, notwithſtanding Proteſtant Diſſenters are not excluded.

"Church."

" Church *." That ſuperiority of ſtrength and numbers is ſo we readily admit; but it remains for the Reviewer to prove the fitneſs of his Church above every other ſect to unite with the preſent monarchical conſtitution of Britain. Here his ſubtlety cannot avail him; for we have the principles of the Church and State of England detailed in the moſt authentic records, and it is impoſſible to conceive of any thing more oppoſite.—Let us view them in contraſt with each other.

Principles of the State.	*Principles of the Church†.*
I. That all kingly governments originate in a ſolemn compact made between the king and the people‡.	I. That all kingly governments originate from God.
II. That kings are truſtees for their ſubjects, and inveſted with power only for their advantage.	II. That kings, holding their crowns by divine right, and being the Lord's anointed, are accountable to God only.
III. That the people may reſiſt a king, who *endeavours* to ſubvert	III. That the people may not, in any caſe, even that of religion, re-

* Review, p. 19.

† See chapter iv.

‡ See Reſolution of both Houſes, returned from the Lords, 7 February, 1688. Com. Journals, vol. x. p. 20.—See too the Declaration of Right.

and extirpate their religion, laws, and liberties*.

And that diſtant colonies may reſiſt a parent country, which manifeſts a hoſtile mind againſt them, *by endeavouring to tax them without their own conſent* †.

IV. That the crown of England, and the deſcent, limitation, and *inheritance* thereof may be limited and bound by Act of Parliament‡.

ſiſt their king; but muſt peaceably ſubmit to all his meaſures, however oppreſſive or wicked.

IV. That the crown of England, deſcending by divine, hereditary, indefeaſible right, neither it, nor the deſcent, limitation, or inheritance thereof, can be limited or bound by any human authority whatſoever.

Sacheverell, the champion of paſſive obedience and non-reſiſtance, diſcovered, as well as the Reviewer, a wonderful aſſimilation between the civil conſtitution and the eſtabliſhed Church. The con-

* The Bill of Rights, 1 W. and M. c. ii. ſeſſ. 2.

† The recognition, on the part of Great Britain, of the independence of the United States of America; Mr. Burke's letter to the Sheriffs of Briſtol in 1770; and the Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs, p. 38.

‡ The Act of Succeſſion, 6 Ann. c. vii. ſ. 1.

ſtitution of England, ſays he, " both in Church " and State, has been ſo admirably contrived, with " that wiſdom, weight, and ſagacity, *and the temper* " *and genius of each ſo exactly ſuited and modelled* to " the mutual ſupport and aſſiſtance of one another, " that it is hard to ſay whether the doctrines of the " Church of England contribute more to authorize " and enforce our civil laws, or our laws to main- " tain and defend the doctrines of our Church." Either the Reviewer muſt be an advocate for the divine right of kings, and then he and Sacheverell may very well agree in the obſervation, or there muſt be ſomething extremely ductile in a Church, which poſſeſſes this almoſt miraculous power of exactly ſuiting either of two civil conſtitutions directly repugnant to each other. Sacheverell's defence on his impeachment was, that he had ſtrictly conformed himſelf in his ſermon to the doctrines of the Church; and, among other authorities, he produced the famous Oxford judgment and decree, made, as beforementioned, in 1683. Theſe, it ſeems, however, were not the doctrines of the State; for Sacheverell was convicted and puniſhed, and that judgment and decree burnt by the common hangman. Nor in more modern days could Dr. Nowell eſcape animadverſion from that branch of the legiſlature to whom he preached in the ſame ſtrain. While this country was curſt with the tyranny of the Stuarts, the Reviewer's obſervation might have been perfectly true; for then, indeed, was found a

wonderful fitneſs in the principles of the Church to unite with thoſe of the State. The revolution introduced a happy change in the civil conſtitution, and liberty became the portion of Engliſhmen; but the Church remained the ſame, and ſlaviſh are *ſtill* her doctrines. Notwithſtanding this, the clergy have dared to boaſt of *their* eccleſiaſtical conſtitution, and its principles being *eſſential* to the ſupport of this free ſtate, even under the auſpicious reign of one of that family, whoſe right to the throne High Churchmen have hardly yet ceaſed to diſpute!

Miſled by theſe clerical adviſers, the firſt reſolution of the county of Warwick, was, "that the "Church of England, as by law eſtabliſhed, is an "*eſſential* part of the Britiſh conſtitution;" and the gentlemen, clergy, and inhabitants of the city of Coventry, "have been led," it ſeems, "to con-"ſider the eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhment as *eſſentially* "incorporated with our national polity," &c. That ſuch abſurd notions ſhould prevail in the county where Sacheverell lived and preached, is hardly matter of ſurprize; but that Mr. Burke, who affects to be an apoſtle of Whiggiſm, and prides himſelf on the conſiſtent tenor of his public conduct, ſhould fall into the ſame error, is not eaſily to be accounted for. "It is on ſome ſuch "principles," ſays he "that the majority of the "people of England, far from thinking a religious "national eſtabliſhment unlawful, hardly think it "lawful to be without one." ——— "This prin-

" ciple runs through the whole of their polity. " They do not conſider their Church eſtabliſhment " as convenient, but as *eſſential to their State*; not " as a thing heterogeneous and ſeparable; ſome- " thing added for accommodation; what they may " either keep up or lay aſide, according to their " temporary ideas of convenience. They conſider " it as *the foundation of their whole conſtitution,* " *with which, and every part of which, it holds an* " *indiſſoluble union. Church and State are ideas* " *inſeparable* in their minds, and ſcarcely is the one " ever mentioned without mentioning the other*." One might almoſt ſuſpect that the gentlemen, clergy, and inhabitants of Coventry, had aſſiſted in the compoſition of this paragraph. That Mr. Burke has here deſerted the principles of the Old Whigs will be apparent to any one who will take the trouble to refer back to the times in which they lived. Where, for example, in the works of the Whig *Biſhops*, for ſuch there were in thoſe days, will he find that the Church is *eſſential to the State*, or that our *whole conſtitution is founded* upon it? The Biſhops Burnet and Hoadley taught a different doctrine, and found it difficult enough to reconcile them at all with each other.

An alliance might indeed be pretended between a ſtate and the papal hierarchy, where that is the eſtabliſhed religion, becauſe it claims to be ſeparate from, and independent of, all civil government.

* Reflections on the Revolution in France, 1ſt Edit. p. 147.

But when Henry the Eighth ſhook off the papal yoke, he did not ſeek the alliance of any church then exiſting, but actually made a church of his own; and, though a layman, aſſumed the ſupremacy *as king*, founding his claim on *divine right*, and the *word of God*, with powers almoſt as great as had been before uſurped by the pope, and burning thoſe who did not believe the doctrines he had ſanctioned. The act concerning the deprivations of the Biſhops of Saliſbury and Worceſter (25 Hen. 8. c. 5.) has this preamble: "Where before this "time, the Church of England, *by the king's moſt* "*noble progenitors*, and the nobles of the ſame, "have been *founded, ordained, and eſtabliſhed, in the* "*eſtate and degree of prelatic dignities, and other pro-* "*motions ſpiritual, &c.*" And the 1ſt ſection of the ſtatute of the 37th of Hen. 8. c. 17. has theſe remarkable words: "Whereas your moſt royal "majeſty *is, and hath always juſtly been, by the word* "*of God, ſupreme head in earth of the Church of* "*England*, and hath full power and authority to "correct, puniſh, and repreſs all manner of here-"ſies, errors, vices, ſins, abuſes, adulteries, hy-"pocriſies, and ſuperſtitions, ſpringing and grow-"ing within the ſame, and to exerciſe all other "manner of juriſdictions, commonly called ec-"cleſiaſtical juriſdictions," &c. When then did any alliance take place, by which the church *gave up its ſupremacy* to the king? He claimed it, and exerciſed the powers belonging to it, as given to him *by the word of God*, down to the revolution; and

and the canons, and all the public acts of the church, acknowledged this *divine right*. The clergy are now bound by those canons and public acts, and therefore must still acknowledge it. But if the divine right to the supremacy was lost at the revolution, with the divine right of kings, and the apostolical succession of bishops, it must now stand, as they do, merely on the authority of the state, and be a delegation of power *from the people*.

Mr. Robinson observed, "that the supreme head "of the Church of England *is* a king or a queen, "Lutheran, Presbyterian, Prelatical, or Popish." The "Reviewer" complains of this calumny, as he calls it, though he does not deny that it *hath been* so. Mr. Robinson does not mean, as the Reviewer falsely insinuates, that a popish king may *now*, in defiance of an act of parliament, preside, but that there *is* nothing in the internal government of the *church* itself to prevent a Papist from presiding over it; the bishops themselves must have thought so, when they voted against the exclusion of James the Second; and when, after the revolution, they voted that he had not abdicated the throne. It shews the wonderful pliability of this church, if its supremacy is derived in any other way than through the ordinance of God, that its head may be a male or female, or of a religion hostile or friendly, as the state thinks fit. Like the Vicar of Bray, it takes the strongest side; and one has observed, that if its members were as good-natured as its constitution, it would be *the best*

bred, civileſt church in Chriſtendom. After William the Third had landed with an armed force in England, and before the flight of James the Second, it muſt have ſhocked the pious clergy to put up prayers, in the ſame ſervice, for bleſſings on the latter, as the *Lord's anointed*, followed by a prayer for the Prince of Orange, whom God had ſent to be the defender of our laws and religion, that his perſon might be protected, *his hands ſtrengthened*, &c.!

It is manifeſt, from papers preſerved by Biſhop Burnet *, that Archbiſhop Cranmer was not a ſupporter of the claim of the clergy to a *ſpiritual* commiſſion, but that he conceived the king might nominate the miniſters of God's word †, exactly as he might appoint any civil miniſters. Accordingly, Henry the Eighth delegated this power to Cromwell, as his vicar-general; and biſhops condeſcended to hold their prelatic dignities under commiſſions granted by the crown, *during pleaſure* ‡. Theſe commiſſions empowered them *to ordain and deprive*

* Hiſtory of the Reformation, vol. i. Collect. of Records to Book iii. No. 21.

† In the injunctions to the clergy, made by Cromwell, is this article: "Item, that ye ſhall admit no man to preach "within any your benefices, but ſuch as ſhall appear unto you "to be ſufficiently licenced thereunto *by the king's highneſs, or "his grace's authority*," &c. Ibid. vol. i. Collection of Records to Book iii. No. 11.

‡ The commiſſion of this nature, granted to Bonner is preſerved in Biſhop Burnet's Hiſtory of the Reformation, vol. i. Collection of Records, Book iii. No. 14. In the Church of

deprive prieſts, and perform all the other epiſcopal functions *. Under them they executed all ſpiritual juriſdiction, excommunicating and inflicting all other ſpiritual cenſures *in the name of the king*, and by his authority; and theſe commiſſions were renewed when Edward the Sixth came to the throne †. Bonner was deprived of his biſhoprick by *lay* commiſſioners ‡, and ſeveral other biſhops were deprived §, and the mode of election and conſecration in future ſettled by acts of parliament. In 1637, William, Biſhop of Lincoln, upon a charge of having ſpoken diſloyal words, and ſuborned witneſſes, was, by the court of ſtar-chamber, fined 10,000l. committed to the Tower, and ſuſpended *ab officio & beneficio* ||. The diſcipline and doctrines of the church have been reviſed and altered ſeveral times ſince the Reforma-

of Scotland, while epiſcopacy was eſtabliſhed, the king's ſupremacy was ſo abſolute, that the office of a biſhop there was conferred only *durante bene placito*; and in the reign of King James the Seventh (i. e. James the Second of England) one was deprived of the biſhoprick of Dunkeld, by a letter ſent by the king to his council, which declared him incapable of any other inferior benefice within the kingdom, Oldmixon's Memoirs of North Britain, p. 82.

* Burnet's Hiſtory of the Reformation, vol. ii. p. 206.

† Vol. ii. p. 5.

‡ Ibid. p. 120.

§ See theſe Acts. Ibid. Collection of Records to Book ii. No. 11 and 12.

|| Rapin's Hiſt. of England, vol. ii. p. 302.

tion,

tion, by authority of the ſtate. The ſpiritual courts, originally derived from the king, and for a time conducted in his name, are now ſanctioned by an act of parliament; and the hereſies cognizable in them reduced to a particular ſtandard, and whole claſſes of heretics exempted from their juriſdiction by the ſame authority. At the Revolution, ſeveral biſhops were deprived, and all pretence for an apoſtolical ſucceſſion (as moderate churchmen and Biſhop Warburton allow) was loſt; and in the reign of Queen Anne, Biſhop Atterbury was deprived of "all his offices, dignities, promotions, "and benefices eccleſiaſtical whatever," by a bill of pains and penalties, which declared, that from thenceforth the ſame ſhould be "*actually void, as if* "*he were dead,*" and Dr. Bradford was appointed to ſucceed him. At the Union, the Church of Scotland was declared to be a *true* one, as well as the Church of England; and by a late act of parliament*, Engliſh prelates may conſecrate the ſubjects of foreign ſtates biſhops, but ſuch conſecration ſhall not enable them, or deacons or prieſts admitted by them, to exerciſe their reſpective offices within his majeſty's dominions. Theſe inſtances may ſuffice to prove, that the idea of the church being merely the *creature* of the ſtate is not of novel invention †; and others might be produced, if

* 26th of Geo. the Third, c. 84.

† Dr. Nourſe, preaching at Alresford, ſo long ago as Aug. 31ſt, 1708, at the primary viſitation of Jonathan, Lord Biſhop of Wincheſter, p. 3, ſaid: "But there is a race of men "ſprung

if neceſſary, of the civil government interfering in the ſpiritual concerns of the church.

As well then may the ivy, clinging round the oak, boaſt of an alliance with its ſupporter, or rather a puppet with the man who plays the wires. In the latter caſe, the lifeleſs image is the creature of his fancy; it has no powers but what he has given it; it can uſe them to no purpoſes but ſuch as he pleaſes; it moves and ceaſes to move at his command, and may be deſtroyed when he thinks fit. The Reviewer dignifies this prepoſterous ſcheme too far, in ſuppoſing that the Diſſenters think it "profane and "antichriſtian;" but they are generally of opinion, that the whole hypotheſis is a wild and ridiculous conceit; and, as applied to this country, has no foundation in fact. They admire the ingenuity of the workman, who, with infinite labour, has, out of ſuch caſt-off-rags, been able to make a garment, though pieced all over, and in no degree calculated to fit; but they ſmile at his vanity, when, notwithſtanding the aukward thread-bare appearance, he boaſts that he has fitted the wearer exactly, and with a *new* ſuit.

"ſprung up among us, who, whether out of flattery to the "civil powers, or envy to the proſperity of the clergy, or "with a deſign to ſubvert all religion, do boldly aſſert, that *the "ſpiritual function is a mere creature of the ſtate; that magiſtrates "may conſecrate whom they will, and he becomes a prieſt; that the "ſpiritual character ceaſes whenever they pleaſe to put an end to it;* "*that particularly the clergy of the Church of England* (than which "none ever had a more regular miſſion) *have no authority or "powers but what they derive from the prince*, as the prince ori-"ginally derives his from the people."

Upon

Upon Warburton's principles, it would not be difficult to prove, that the Royal Society has as good a claim to an alliance with the State as the Church. The object of the Royal Society is the promotion of natural, that of the Church, the promotion of religious, knowledge. Both were originally voluntary, and both are engaged in purſuits perfectly independent of the State, for opinions in matters of philoſophy are as little cognizable by the civil power, as in matters of religion, and the care of the civil ſociety extends only to the body and its concerns, and the care of this ſcientific ſociety only to the mind. The Royal Society and the Church were both incorporated, and the mode of keeping up a ſucceſſion in their reſpective corporations regulated by the civil power, and the ſupremacy of both is in the king. In ſhort, all the arguments uſed by Warburton to prove the *neceſſity* of ſome union or alliance between the ſtate and a *religious* ſociety, apply, however ridiculous it may appear, with equal force to a *ſcientific* one. An enemy to eſtabliſhments in general might add other particulars in which there is a material difference; for in the Royal Society there are no creeds eſtabliſhed by authority to fetter the energy of the human mind, and it is ſupported by the *voluntary* ſubſcription of its friends.

The word "Toleration" has a perfectly diſtinct ſignification, when uſed by Nonconformiſts, and High Churchmen; and this has occaſioned no ſmall

ſmall confuſion in the different publications, and ſpeeches in the Houſe of Commons, reſpecting the repeal of the Teſt Laws. Warburton, ſeeing that Sherlock's arguments were ſubverſive of all toleration, found it neceſſary to change the plan of defence, and giving up the principles of his church, allowed that Diſſenters from an eſtabliſhment ought to be tolerated in their own modes of worſhip, and in teaching their own doctrines. This has been dignified by Lord North and others, with the epithet of a *complete* toleration. Even, in this limited ſenſe, we have ſeen it is not enjoyed by *all* the Engliſh Nonconformiſts; but Warburton did not act fairly by his readers, when, after praiſing, and ſeeming to adopt, the arguments of Mr. Locke in favour of toleration, he impoſed upon them a counterfeit of baſe metal, inſtead of the ſterling original. With Mr. Locke and the Nonconformiſts, toleration means the enjoyment of religious liberty, to be reſtrained on no pretence whatever, except where it might have been reſtricted by a civil government, under which no church was eſtabliſhed; but with Warburton and High Churchmen it is only an *indulgence* * extending to worſhip and diſcipline, granted to *ſuch perſons*, and on *ſuch*

* Sacheverell uſed this phraſe in his ſermon, and Queen Anne, in her ſpeech to both houſes of parliament, in 1710, was weak enough to ſay, that ſhe would maintain the *indulgence* (not *toleration*, as had been the uſual language from the throne) granted by law to ſcrupulous conſciences. This change to Sacheverell's expreſſion, we are told by Biſhop Burnet, was much obſerved. Modern High Churchmen almoſt always ſpeak of the *indulgence* granted by the Toleration Act.

conditions,

conditions, as the civil magiſtrate may think fit. The ground-work of their whole ſyſtem is, that it is his duty to reſtrain, ſo far as *he* thinks expedient for that purpoſe; and, as I have intimated before, this introduces the whole ſyſtem of perſecution (which Warburton artfully affects to give up) not indeed to root out error, and ſave men's ſouls, but to *ſecure the eſtabliſhed church*. The extent of this perſecution muſt depend, in general, on the bigotry or timidity of the eſtabliſhed church. Thus we are taught in England, that the excluſion of Nonconformiſts from offices is a *neceſſary* reſtraint, to prevent them from doing miſchief to the eſtabliſhment, while, through the whole extent of Europe, and every other part of the Britiſh empire, the excluſion of Nonconformiſts from offices is deemed an *unneceſſary* precaution. The univerſity of Oxford, in their petition preſented in 1779, againſt the bill for relief of proteſtant diſſenting miniſters and ſchoolmaſters, which at firſt required *no teſt* of their principles, declare themſelves friends to toleration only, "ſo far as the ſame may be *conſiſtent* "*with the intereſts of chriſtianity*, and the ſecurity "of our happy eſtabliſhment in church and ſtate*." Woe be to Jews and Infidels, if the principles of the univerſity of Oxford are taken as the ſtandard of Engliſh Toleration! and ſhould the imaginary fears of High Churchmen affect our legiſlators, it may hereafter be thought neceſſary, in this bigotted country, to ſecure the church by the confiſcation of the property, or deſtruction of the lives, of Non-

* Commons' Journals, vol. 37. p. 299.

conformiſts.

conformiſts. Such may be the bleſſed effects of Warburton's *tolerating* ſyſtem!

That the reſtrictions to be impoſed on Nonconformiſts are to vary as the danger to the eſtabliſhed church is more or leſs imminent, is clear; for the Reviewer tells us, that the right of private judgment cannot "be acknowledged *without reſtriction*, "*more or leſs*, by any eſtabliſhed church in Chriſtendom; a denial of any ſuch unlimited right," (as the Nonconformiſts contend for) "being implied "in the very idea of an eſtabliſhment*." And this he farther explains at the concluſion of his preface, by his hearty prayer (good, holy man!) that our indigenous Diſſenters may "open their eyes "to the diſcernment of this truth; that toleration on the part of government, and a cheerful "ſubmiſſion on the part of the tolerated *to ſome* "*neceſſary reſtraints*, are the only terms upon "which Churchmen and Diſſenters *can ever walk* "*together as friends*." Here he ſpeaks out boldly, and in the language of authority; and let me add alſo, that in theſe two ſhort ſentences, he has done more injury to the eſtabliſhed church, than Meſſrs. Price, Prieſtley, and Robinſon, in all their publications. He has here given to the enemies of the church the ſtrongeſt argument that can be deviſed againſt eſtabliſhments *in general*. If it is "implied in the very *idea* of an eſtabliſhment," that the right of private judgment *muſt* be reſtrained and limited, and that the civil government

* Page 25.

muſt

muſt exerciſe a juriſdiction over the conſciences of men, and that too, to *any* extent, every eſtabliſhment is founded in oppreſſion, and the government that ſupports it can be juſt neither in its principles nor adminiſtration. The Nonconformiſts have lamented the injuſtice of their country, which laid them under reſtraints and diſabilities, for differing from the eſtabliſhment in certain opinions, which do not in the ſmalleſt degree prevent them from being good ſubjects, or faithfully performing any civil duties. But they have not been accuſtomed to conſider theſe oppreſſions as ſo *neceſſarily* interwoven with the eſtabliſhment, as that in ſeeking their own relief, they muſt in proportion accelerate its deſtruction. They have not been accuſtomed to look with an hoſtile eye to the Church. But if the only terms on which they and Churchmen can ever walk together as friends, are the ſubmiſſion to ſuch neceſſary reſtraints as *Churchmen* may think fit to impoſe, they muſt feel it their duty to enter a proteſt, and refuſe the proffered amity.

The next ſtep in the Reviewer's argument ſhould be to prove, that the excluſion of Nonconformiſts from public offices is one of the *neceſſary* reſtraints he has juſt alluded to. To do this, he muſt lay down as a general principle that which is univerſally contradicted by the experience of mankind. Not a ſingle ſtate on the continent of Europe can he point out where ſuch excluſion takes place; one part of Great Britain itſelf has generouſly diſdained to owe the ſecurity of her church to ſuch injuſtice;

injuſtice*; and another part of the Britiſh empire has parted with its teſt law, and felt no injury to its

* At the Union, the parliament of Scotland declined to ſtipulate for a Teſt Act, for ſecurity of the eſtabliſhed church; and when the act in favour of the epiſcopal clergy of Scotland paſſed, a motion was made to inſert a clauſe in the bill, "to "oblige all perſons in Scotland, who had any civil or military "office, or any ſalary, or place of profit under the government, "to attend divine ſervice according to the law of Scotland." It was rejected, the major part of the Scots members voting againſt it. *Oldmixon's Memoirs of North Britain, p.* 270.—How dignified and generous this conduct of the people of Scotland, compared with the unjuſt and diſingenuous terms on which they were permitted to enjoy a toleration in this country! But this liberality of ſentiment might well be expected from a nation, whoſe parliament, in the beginning of King William's reign, had paſſed an act "reſcinding all penal laws on ſuch as "ſeparated from the *new* eſtabliſhed Church, or kept conven-"ticles, and taking away all teſts, and other letts, in order to "incapacitate all Proteſtants for employments, without diſtinc-"tion; and that every man may have full liberty to ſerve God "his own way." Ib. 85.

The 4th ſection of the act of Parliament of Scotland, *for ſecuring the Proteſtant Religion and Preſbyterian Church Government within the kingdom of Scotland,* made perpetual in the 25th article of the Union, "declares and ſtatutes, that none of the "ſubjects of this kingdom ſhall be liable to, but all and every "one of them for ever free of any oath, teſt, or ſubſcription "*within this kingdom*, contrary to or inconſiſtent with the afore-"ſaid true Proteſtant religion, and Preſbyterian Church go-"vernment, worſhip, and diſcipline, as above eſtabliſhed; "and that the ſame, *within the bounds of this Church and King-"dom*, ſhall never be impoſed upon, or required of them in any "ſort." Suppoſe a ſubject of Scotland to be made a baron of the exchequer there, or governor of Fort William, is he not liable to the Act of 16th Geo. the Second, c. 30. and bound to take a teſt inconſiſtent with the eſtabliſhed religion of his country? And is not the impoſition of the Engliſh teſt laws upon

its eſtabliſhment. How then can this reſtraint be *neceſſary* to ſupport *every* eſtabliſhed church, when *all but one* can do without it? There muſt be "ſomething rotten in the ſtate of Denmark," ſomething peculiarly weak in the conſtitution of the Church of *England*, which induces *it* to rely on a ſupport rejected by all other countries.

Dr. Sacheverell had little confidence in its merits as a Church, when he called the Corporation and Teſt Acts the *only* ſecurity it had to depend upon; or in the efficacy of that ſecurity, which, even in his time, he ſays, the Diſſenters "have ſo far "eluded by their abominable hypocriſy, as to have "*undermined her foundation, and endanger the govern-*"*ment*, by filling it with its profeſſed enemies." The inhabitants of Mancheſter hold a different language in their late reſolutions, and "approve and "admire the wiſdom of our anceſtors, in enact-"ing the receiving the ſacrament of the Lord's

Scottiſh ſubjects an infraction of this ſtipulation in the articles of Union?

The Church of Scotland has felt her degraded ſituation, and made more than one effort to recover her independence. In 1715, the General Aſſembly drew up a memorial, ſtating, "that "it is an inequality and hardſhip upon the eſtabliſhed Church of "Scotland, that thoſe of her communion, who are employed "in his majeſty's ſervice in England or Ireland, ſhould be "obliged to join in communion with the Church of England." In 1790, the Church of Scotland again came forward to ſtate her own grievances, and though the Reviewer even had admitted ſhe would deſerve a *reſpectful* hearing, the Houſe of Commons rejected the prayer of her memorial in a very thin Houſe, the votes being 149 to 62, moſt of the Scotch members voting in the majority!

"Supper,

" Supper, according to the uſage of the Church of " England, as a *ſufficient* teſt, and *effectual* ſafe- " guard to our happy conſtitution in Church and " State;" ſo that now neither the foundation of the Church is undermined, nor the government endangered! It is a comfort that the morals of the Diſſenters are ſo wonderfully improved ſince Sacheverell's time!

The apprehenſions of the Reviewer, are, leſt the Church ſhould be injured by the opportunities given, by repealing the teſt laws, to the zealous and cunning Nonconformiſts, which would operate to its gradual ruin*. In another place he ſpeaks of it as being the *remote* but certain, conſequence; and intimates that it may be *more than a century* in compleating †—and this we may preſume is the *diſtant probability* mentioned in the reſolutions of the Society for promoting Chriſtian Knowledge. Under theſe circumſtances the experiment might be worth the trying, and could be attended with little riſk; for during this very ſlow and gradual proceſs, the legiſlature might at any time ſtep in to prevent the miſchief. The experience of Scotland and Ireland at home, and of all the nations in Chriſtendom abroad, might give confidence to any politicians, but prieſts. Moreover, it may deſerve the ſerious conſideration of the well-wiſhers to the Church, whether the eager zeal of the ſons of bigotry may not accelerate its fall. The Church was eſtabliſhed more than two hundred years ago, in the infancy

* P. 54. † Ibid.

of learning in Europe. The intellect of man has been improving ever ſince, and yet *the Church* (I ſpeak not of Churchmen) has made *no improvement at all.* To ſuppoſe that there is nothing in its doctrines or diſcipline that can be objected to, or improved, is an abſurdity; it is to ſet up infallibility, and deny that the intellect of man is capable of improvement. Notwithſtanding this, High Churchmen put their *veto* upon every attempt at reformation, and anſwer argument and reaſon by an appeal to the paſſions of the people, and the cry of "danger to the Church."—In this manner they have, for a time, defeated the Diſſenter's attempt to obtain the repeal of the teſt laws.—But can it be wiſe, in this age of liberality, or (as the Reviewer would ſay) of licentiouſneſs, to provoke the ſpirit of enquiry, and riſk the exiſtence of the eſtabliſhment itſelf, for the preſervation of its buttreſſes? The Church has already loſt much by the conteſt, and an obſtinate adherence to the ſame falſe policy will certainly haſten its reformation, and perhaps (what moderate men have not wiſhed) its final ruin.

If the Reviewer had proceeded ſo far in his argument, as to prove that the excluſion of ſectaries from offices was in truth a neceſſary reſtriction to ſecure the Church of England, "the expe-"diency of Queen Anne's ſtatute againſt occaſional "conformity *" could not be diſputed; but the legiſlature

* The progreſs of this ſtatute againſt occaſional conformity, if detailed at length, would be a precious morſel of High Church hiſtory.

legiſlature itſelf, by the repeal of that act, has ſolemnly and authoritatively declared, that the in-

hiſtory. On the 8th of Mar. 1700, on the motion of Sir John Packington, leave was given for bringing in a bill "for the better "preſervation of the Proteſtant religion, and for preventing the "tranſlation of biſhops from one ſee to another." This was ſupported by High Churchmen, with a view to weaken the power of the Court over the higheſt dignitaries of the Church, becauſe it happened that the Biſhops of thoſe days were generally Whigs, and friendly to the revolution. The Biſhops and the Diſſenters were then on the ſame ſide in politics, and therefore the friends to the original ſcheme for the bill willingly conſented to the addition of a clauſe, that "in caſe any perſon admitted to any "office in England or Wales, ſhould, at any time, whilſt he was in "office, frequent or go to any other place of divine worſhip than "ſome of the places ſet apart for the ſervice of the Church of "England, his office ſhould be thenceforth void." The bill, with this additional clauſe, was read a ſecond time, and committed; and the committee was afterwards empowered to think of methods for augmenting ſmall biſhopricks. See Journals of the Commons, vol. xiii. p. 388, 501, 560. So many difficulties occurred in fixing upon a plan for augmenting the ſmall biſhopricks, that no further progreſs was made, and the bill dropped. King William died on the 8th of March, 1701, and the firſt parliament of Queen Anne met on the 20th of October, 1702. By the change of ſovereigns the power to tranſlate biſhops was no longer a grievance to High Churchmen, but as the Diſſenters ſtill continued firm in their attachment to the principles of the Revolution, and determined to ſecure, if poſſible, the acceſſion of the houſe of Hanover, the perſecution was continued againſt them; and on the 4th of November, 1702, leave was given to bring in a bill, not "to prevent the tranſlation of biſhops," but "for preventing occaſional conformity" only. Journals of the Commons, vol. xiv. p. 14. This was the origin of a bill, obſtinately preſſed upon the legiſlature by the High Church party, and at length carried into a law, after it had been rejected by the Lords no leſs than three times.

tention of impoſing the ſacramental teſt was not to exclude *all* Nonconformiſts from office, and that ſuch total excluſion is not expedient. This obſervation is a ſufficient anſwer to one, who thinks "it "might ill become private citizens, without ſome "better authority than merely that of their own "judgments, to agitate a queſtion which the le-"giſlature of the country hath *once* ſolemnly "decided;" but in juſtice to the Diſſenters it deſerves to be further diſcuſſed.

The Reviewer, in the threſhold of his argument, makes a pretty bold aſſumption: "That a Diſſen-"ter, whatever may be his integrity and piety, "whatever may be the grounds of his diſſent, "is an unfit perſon to be entruſted with com-"mand, authority, and influence, in any ſtate in "which the civil magiſtrate takes a particular "church under his protection, is an axiom in "politics, of which," ſays he, "it is hoped a re-"gular proof is not at this time wanting *." The Reviewer deceives himſelf, if he ſuppoſes that this propoſition, which is an axiom in politics in no other part of Europe, will be admitted as an axiom in Engliſh politics without proof. While the advocates, indeed, of the Church defended the eſtabliſhment as the repoſitory of truth, and perſecuted Nonconformiſts for their error, no proof could have been neceſſary; but ſince they have abandoned thoſe principles, which the Church retains, and ſupport it upon the ground of *public*

* Review, p. 14.

utility

utility only, it is incumbent on them to make out this unfitneſs in Diſſenters. In doing this, ſome of them may be ſurprized to find, in the reſult, that it is as eaſy to prove, upon the principles of High Churchmen, that Nonconformiſts ſhould be burnt, as that they ſhould be excluded from offices.

This axiom may be traced (with moſt of the arguments of High Churchmen) to Sacheverell. In his ſermon, he ſays, "*as the Engliſh government* "*can never be ſecure on any other principles, but* "*ſtrictly thoſe of the Church of England*, ſo I will "be bold to ſay, where any part of it is truſted "in perſons of any other notions, they muſt be "falſe to themſelves, if they are true to their truſts; "or, if they are true to their opinions and inte- "reſts, muſt betray that government they are "enemies to upon principle." Here it muſt be allowed, that the Doctor, aſſuming that paſſive obedience and non-reſiſtance were the principles of the Engliſh government, had a right to the reſt of his argument; for to *ſuch a government* the Diſſenters always had been, and I truſt ever will be, enemies upon principle. But if I am to conſider the Reviewer as a friend to thoſe principles on which alone our preſent monarchical conſtitution can be defended (but which ſome paſſages in his book may occaſion one to doubt of) *he* can have no right to uſe it. In truth, the tables are reverſed, and the Diſſenters hold thoſe principles which ſecure the Britiſh government, while Churchmen muſt betray it, if they are true to the opinions

of their Church. I am not inclined to appeal from this judgment of Sacheverell.

Biſhop Warburton, who appears diſpoſed to give up the doctrines of paſſive obedience and non-reſiſtance, did not forget what Sacheverell had preached. He found, however, ſome difficulty in proving the unfitneſs of a claſs of men to be entruſted with power, whoſe political principles were preciſely thoſe on which alone the revolution, and our preſent civil government, can be juſtified, and was obliged at laſt to reſt his proof of their unfitneſs, merely on the ill will he ſuppoſed them to bear to the eſtabliſhed Church. But even the arrogance of Warburton ſtated this only as a poſition to be proved. Biſhop Halifax has adopted nearly his words; but in the hands of the Reviewer it is become a *ſelf-evident* propoſition. If every aſſertion which has been made by one biſhop, and repeated by another, is to become an *axiom* in politics, this country is not likely long to enjoy its preſent proſperity, for biſhops have uſually been miſerable politicians.

Though regular proof of the above extraordinary poſition is not deemed to be wanting, the Reviewer graciouſly condeſcends to attempt it in this manner: "Ill will to the eſtabliſhment muſt, in "all governments, belong to the character of a "Diſſenter, if he be an honeſt man; and conſe- "quently every Nonconformiſt will be inclined to "uſe any influence or authority, with which an im- "politic government may entruſt him, to advance "his

" his own ſect in the popular eſteem, and to in-
" creaſe its numbers; and, as a means to this end,
" he will uſe all means that ſeem to himſelf fair and
" honourable, to undermine the Church eſtabliſh-
" ed, if there is any hope that its fall may facilitate
" the eſtabliſhment of his own, or of ſome other
" more congenial to his own *." And therefore,
" he cannot but miſuſe" the power truſted to him, and the harm that he may do, under the notion of doing good, will be only ſo much the more, *the greater we ſuppoſe his virtues and abilities.* Upon theſe *undeniable principles* the policy of a teſt law is made to depend. Here the Reviewer makes the hope of ſubſtituting one eſtabliſhment for another the ſole ſpur † to this " miſuſe of power." But the Diſſenters have no general form of Church diſcipline among them, and ſo can entertain no wiſhes to eſtabliſh any on the ruins of the Church, and this I will prove from the Reviewer himſelf. " For of what higher value," ſays he, " would be
" the praiſes of diſcordant ſects, incapable of
" bringing any ſtrength to government as a Church,
" becauſe they hold all alliance of a Church with
" government to be profane and antichriſtian. *This*
" *is the very ground of their implacable animoſity to*
" *the preſent eſtabliſhment*, inſomuch that could a
" formulary of faith be compoſed, to which they
" could all aſſent in every article; a mode of
" faith inſtituted, which they ſhould unanimouſly

* Review, p. 15.

† The ſeventh reſolution of the clergy of the archdeaconry of Cheſter is in the ſame ſtrain.

" approve;

" approve; a form of Church government de-
" viſed, which they ſhould all deſire to adopt; yet
" from this beſt of all poſſible churches, were it
" once eſtabliſhed, they would be ſtill Diſſen-
" ters *." If further proof ſhould be required, it may be found in the hiſtory of the Diſſenters, and in their conduct to each other.

The Reviewer indeed ſays, that " amidſt the
" perpetual ſtruggles of the Church of England
" with her numerous enemies, thoſe various ſects
" which, with little good liking to each other,
" have *always*, however, been confederated † for
" her deſtruction," &c. One might aſk, where are theſe *numerous* enemies of the Church of England, and in what hiſtory are theſe *perpetual* ſtruggles recorded? As applied to the Proteſtant Diſſenters, the aſſertion is as falſe as it is malicious; and I defy the Reviewer to produce a ſingle inſtance of ſuch confederation ſince there was any toleration in England. The repeal of the teſt laws has been the ſole object for which they have ever made an attempt to form any union, and that union has never been ſo nearly perfected, *as ſince the Reviewer wrote.* In ſhort, during the courſe of more than a century, theſe implacable enemies have,

* Review, p. 20.

† Peter Haddon, M. A. Vicar of Leeds, and fourteen of the clergy of the pariſh of Leeds, could not ſee " the late alarm-
" ing confederacy of denominations ſo widely diſtant from each
" other in ſome eſſentials of Chriſtianity, in any other light, than
" as ultimately meaning a conteſt for power in the State." Poor ſouls! had they poſſeſſed the wiſdom of the Reviewer, they might have known this confederacy had *always* exiſted.

upon

upon *no one* occaſion, ſhown ill will to the eſtabliſhment, but on the contrary have *more than once* teſtified their affection and regard, as has even been publicly acknowledged. The general courſe of education among the Diſſenters has been, to teach their youth to look towards the eſtabliſhed Church with reſpect, and even affection, and inſtead of an enemy, to treat her as a friend and ally in the common cauſe of proteſtantiſm, againſt popery. Hence ſtrong prejudices in favour of the Church, and perhaps unjuſt ones againſt the Catholics, ſtill hang upon many of the Diſſenters; but if their regard for the Church has been ſomewhat diminiſhed of late, the conduct of its clergy may well account for it.

With reſpect to the conduct of the different ſects of Diſſenters to each other, it is moſt true that they conſiſt of *diſcordant* ſects; but they can differ from each other without the ſmalleſt animoſity or ill will; for each allowing to others the liberty they claim for themſelves, that difference creates no coolneſs or diſlike, nor prevents them from uniting cordially with each other in purſuit of a general object. This the High Churchmen have at length diſcovered, to their great diſmay, *hinc illæ lachrymæ*; hence the late violent ſtorms raiſed by the bigotry and ſelfiſhneſs of prieſts. For *ſeveral years* together we have ſeen the utmoſt harmony prevail among the Diſſenters, and a perfect unanimity in ſoliciting the removal of a grievance equally affecting them all,

None

None of the ſects of Diſſenters of the preſent day have any form of Church government, nor do they feel ſuch a predilection for any, as to wiſh to ſubſtitute it for the preſent one. When Epiſcopacy and Preſbyterianiſm were diſputing which ſhould be the eſtabliſhed religion, and perſecute the other, it is no wonder that there ſhould be an implacable animoſity between *them*; but ſince the deſcendants of the Preſbyterians have given up their ſyſtem of Church government, and become Independents in diſcipline, there is no room left for rivalſhip. The general principle of Diſſenters of all denominations now is, that there ſhould be a general toleration to all peaceable ſubjects, underſtanding by the word *toleration*, not merely an indulgence as to the exerciſe of public worſhip, but *religious liberty*; allowing to all peaceable ſubjects the full enjoyment of their own religious ſentiments and forms, without the infliction of any penalties or diſabilities for preferring them. And that this is not only their principle, but their practice, may be ſeen from their behaviour in the colony of Maſſachuſet's-bay, where they had the civil power in their own hands. Every man there is not only permitted to worſhip God in his own way, but all incapacities on account of religious tenets are unknown. The Diſſenters in England have been well inclined to the eſtabliſhed religion, and cheerfully contributed to its ſupport. This they did without foreſeeing, as the Reviewer ungenerouſly inſinuates, that "* its ruin * would be the means of ſetting up another, from

" which

" which their party would meet with leſs indul-
" gence *." Though it appears from the Reviewer, that " their chieftains had piped" *in vain* " on the hills," for many years †, yet numerous have been the converts made againſt the policy of eſtabliſhments in general, by Churchmen themſelves, in the ſhort ſpace of a few months. The illiberal treatment which the Diſſenters have met with, has occaſioned an enquiry into the principles of thoſe, who have ſo violently oppoſed the claims of juſtice; and in the doctrines of the church herſelf they diſcover the ſource whence flows the ſtream of bigotry and narrow-mindedneſs among her ſons.

High Churchmen ſupport their claim to exclude Diſſenters from offices in the following manner:—It is juſt, ſay they, in a government, to incapacitate

* Review, p. 14.

† It ſeems that Dr. Prieſtley and Mr. Robinſon are unfriendly to civil eſtabliſhments of religion. Review, p. 30, 31.—Mr. Robinſon's plan of Lectures there alluded to, purports to have been approved by the eaſtern aſſociation at Harlow in 1778. This approbation, which ſo much terified the Reviewer, and was honoured with mention by Mr. Burke, was given by a few miniſters among the Baptiſts only, meeting at Harlow in Eſſex. The bulk of the Nonconformiſts, ſo far from being the diſciples of Mr. Robinſon, had moſt probably *never ſeen his work*, or even *heard of the Eaſtern Aſſociation*, invidiouſly dignified by the Reviewer with the appellation of the Harlow Synod, until they were honoured with notice in the legiſlature. Mr. Robinſon, in his preface to the fifth edition of his Plan of Lectures, printed in 1781, ſays, " This little piece was written " without any malevolent deſign, about three years ago, *for the* " *uſe of a few aſſociated churches*, and, *by their deſire*, to avoid " the trouble of tranſcribing, it was printed; but it was not then " *publiſhed*,

citate thoſe perſons from the enjoyment of public offices, who do not conform to the eſtabliſhed Church, becauſe they *may be inclined* to uſe their influence, as far as is fair and juſtifiable, to increaſe the popularity and numbers of their ſects. It has been a mean and timid maxim of ſome tyrannical governments, to puniſh men becauſe it was *apprehended* they *might* do ſome harm, making the puniſhment precede the proof of guilt; and if the maxim went upon this principle, that a Diſſenter was a bad man, and muſt make an unfair uſe of the influence of office, precedents might be found to juſtify their incapacitation. But the whole body of prieſts cannot produce in hiſtory a ſingle inſtance of the excluſion of honeſt men, merely becauſe they *might be inclined* to uſe their influence fairly, in purſuit of an *honeſt* purpoſe, for ſuch the Reviewer's hypotheſis aſſumes it to be. Equality is the juſt foundation of all government, and no partial advantages ſhould be given, or partial reſtraints laid, or continued (not now adverting to their nature or object) except ſuch as *the exiſting* government may deem expedient for the general good. But the power of making and altering laws, which deſcends from the exiſting legiſlators to their ſucceſſors, neceſſarily implies that the laws made by their predeceſſors

" *publiſhed*, nor was it intended to be publiſhed afterwards, " becauſe," &c.—Mr. William Smith, a Diſſenter, and Member of Parliament, declared in the debate, (1790) that till that day he had *never ſeen* this publication; and though he had lived for five years within two miles of Harlow, he had *never heard of* any ſuch meeting there.

may be changed or altered, as circumſtances require; and it would be both frivolous and unjuſt for the perſons in whom the legiſlative power for the moment reſides, to ordain, that any particular law made by them ſhould be *perpetual*. They can judge only of the propriety of the law at the time of making it, and they neither ought nor can prevent thoſe who ſucceed them alſo from exerciſing their judgment, and altering it, whenever required for the good of their country. Hence the oath impoſed on the nonconforming miniſters by the Five Mile Act, viz. that they ſhould not attempt any alteration in government in Church or State *; and the attempt made afterwards to bind all public officers, privy counſellors, and members of parliament, by a ſimilar engagement, were unjuſt and tyrannical. But it would be leſs unjuſt to force a Diſſenter to ſwear that he would not attempt any alterations in the eſtabliſhed Church, than to

* The clergy introduced this ingenious device to protect their Church, in the canons made in 1640, and thereby all perſons eccleſiaſtical, and all perſons taking degrees at the univerſities, were bound to take an oath, that they approved "the doctrine "and diſcipline, or government, eſtabliſhed in the Church of "England," and would not conſent to alter the government of it. After the Reſtoration the following oath, alluded to in the text, was impoſed on the Nonconformiſt Miniſters.

"I, A. B. do ſwear, that it is not lawful, upon any pretence "whatſoever, to take arms againſt the king, and that I do abhor "that traiterous poſition of taking arms, by his authority, "againſt his perſon, or againſt thoſe that are commiſſionated by "him, in purſuance of ſuch commiſſion; and *that I will not, at "any time, endeavour any alteration of government, either in "Church or State.*"

lay

lay him under penal reſtrictions, merely from the apprehenſion that he might be inclined to attempt it. It muſt be competent for every ſubject to lay his own perſonal grievances before the legiſlature, and point out the injurious effect of any law under which he ſuffers.

But if penal reſtrictions were even juſtifiable in this caſe, they ought to extend equally to all perſons, and all laws, and not to be confined to one claſs of ſubjects, in order to give an undue preference to another. When taxes were impoſed on callicoes and ſhops, it was never propoſed to incapacitate all callico-printers and ſhop-keepers, becauſe they might be inclined to exert their influence for redreſs of the oppreſſion; when the bills for laying an exciſe on tobacco, and for letting to farm the duties upon poſt horſes, were before the Houſe of Commons, did any member move, that all thoſe who oppoſed them within doors ſhould be excluded from office, leſt by their influence the nation might, at ſome future time, be convinced of the impolicy of continuing them? In ſhort, the conſequence of this principle would carry us to a frightful extent. If it is conceded, that the legiſlature may, to ſecure *any one* law, exclude from office all thoſe who oppoſed it, it may extend the ſame ſecurity to *all*. It may go ſtill further, and not reſt the ſecurity of its laws upon an excluſion from offices only, but may ſuppreſs every civil right of thoſe who are ſuſpected of diſaffection. They may be forbid to poſſeſs land, or property of any ſort, as being accompanied with influence.

They

They may be abridged of liberty, and perhaps, at a favourable opportunity, ſome merciful eccleſiaſtic may recommend the cutting out of tongues, and the lopping off of hands, that all the means of perſuaſion may be extinguiſhed.

As an *argumentum ad hominem* againſt High Churchmen, it may be obſerved, that if the *undeniable* principle on which the policy of a teſt is founded, is that a preference cannot but be given by every man to the ſect to which he himſelf belongs, and that a Diſſenter muſt bear ill-will to an eſtabliſhment, it neceſſarily follows, that the eſtabliſhment muſt alſo bear ill-will to Diſſenters; and thus the Church is contending for a monopoly of offices, for the avowed purpoſe of keeping down all the other ſects, againſt which it is confeſſed by the hypotheſis, that *ſhe feels* ill-will and animoſity. It is hard and unjuſt then upon the Diſſenters, that this influence, of whatever ſort, ſo much prized by thoſe who are in poſſeſſion, ſhould be kept from them, for the avowed purpoſe of uſing it to their prejudice. Indeed, upon the Reviewer's principle, there muſt be a plentiful portion of ill-will among the ſubjects of every country, in which there is an eſtabliſhment; for Nonconformiſts muſt, *according to him*, be the implacable enemies of the Church, which muſt return that enmity to Nonconformiſts. And not only toleration, but the public peace, muſt be always in a precarious ſituation, where ſo much is dreaded for the eſtabliſhment.

In one word, where the ſtate has ſelected and eſtabliſhed that ſect, which is approved of by the majority of the people, or which, by the fitneſs of its internal form of church government is beſt fitted to unite with the civil conſtitution (as the Reviewer would ſay) and has provided for the maintenance of its clergy, it is the duty of the civil power to take all the other ſects under its protection, and to defend them, as well from the incroachments of each other, as from the uſurpations of the eſtabliſhed one. Againſt an eſtabliſhment ſo conſtituted, thoſe, not included in it, would have no motive for ill-will. In all great queſtions within the juriſdiction of the civil government (and this we aſſume to be one) the majority muſt decide, and the minority ſubmit. It often happens that the people are divided in opinion upon public meaſures, and it would be as reaſonable, for inſtance, to incapacitate all the friends to a reform of parliament, as the Diſſenters. If the latter muſt neceſſarily be diſſatisfied, and inclined to undermine the Church, the former muſt neceſſarily be diſpoſed to uſe the influence and authority "impoliticly in-"truſted" with them, to undermine the civil conſtitution. They have both applied to parliament for an alteration of the laws, or, ſome may ſay, an amendment of the conſtitution, and both without ſucceſs; and there is nothing criminal in endeavouring by argument to change the opinions of our legiſlators, to whom at laſt theſe queſtions muſt be again referred. This is what every ſtate muſt neceſſarily be liable to, and is no more to be complained

plained of in this inſtance, than where the reform of any merely civil corporation is in view. High Churchmen, indeed, artfully caſt a veil of ſanctity over the Church *, and to examine the truth of its doctrines, or the propriety of its diſcipline, has been treated as ſacrilege. But the triumphs of prieſtcraft are nearly over in this country, and thoſe doctrines and that diſcipline are now openly diſcuſſed and controverted. The Diſſenters in general, ſo far from bearing ill-will to the eſtabliſhment *as ſuch*, admit its *utility* † as a mere human inſtitution, on the whole well calculated for the inſtruc-

* The Common Council of London, in their Reſolutions of the 25th of February, 1790, incloſed both the Church *and State* in the mantle of ſanctity, and ſpoke "of our *ſacred* conſtitu-"tion in Church and State."

† Biſhop Warburton, Biſhop Halifax, Archdeacon Paley, and in general all the modern defenders of the eſtabliſhed Church, have reſted its right to a preference ſolely on its *civil utility*. The Diſſenters in general have not been inclined to controvert thus much of their argument in its favour, having no ſyſtem of Church diſcipline to ſet up in its room, and conceiving highly of the beneficial influence of the inſtructions of its clergy on the minds of the people. But the beſt inſtitutions are liable to be perverted; and whenever, upon the whole, an eſtabliſhment is ſo conducted, as to do more miſchief by introducing narrow bigotted notions *in religion*, deſtructive of that charity which it ought to inculcate, and principles *in politics* inimical to that civil conſtitution of government, which has given it a preference, than it does good in the immediate object of its inſtitution, it ceaſes, as Churchmen admit, to be *uſeful*, and forfeits all claim to public confidence and favour.

tion of the people in the principles of morality and religion. But they join with many of the moſt reſpectable members of the Church itſelf, in the wiſh to ſee it reformed and improved, particularly in what relates to civil and religious liberty. How the wiſhing for the improvement of the eſtabliſhed Church can be a bearing of ill-will to it, remains for High Churchmen to diſcover.

The Reveiwer gives us a compariſon between *factions* and *religious feuds*, both of which, he wiſely concludes, are original ſins in particular circumſtances. How happy this alluſion! How ſharp-ſighted this politician! So far are what he calls *factions* (that is, the union of ſmall bodies of individuals, jealous of the conduct of the governing power) from being the remains of evils, that they form the watchmen of the ſtate, and beſt preſervatives of the liberties of a country. To abuſe power is a failing of humanity, and the more vigilant the governed, the more correct the conduct of the governors. *Religious feuds*, or, as I would call them, religious *differences*, are not the remains of the ſame cauſe, much leſs of the ſame evils, but the neceſſary conſequence of every man being permitted to think for himſelf in matters of religion. A variety of opinions will ariſe, and thoſe who think alike will aſſociate, and worſhip God together; but ſo far from being injurious, it is highly beneficial to religion that its doctrines ſhould be contraſted and diſcuſſed. High Churchmen alone, who

prefer

prefer the intereſts of their ſect or party to thoſe of religion, would wiſh to damp the ſpirit of enquiry, and vilify the exerciſe of the nobleſt faculty of man, with the opprobrious epithet of *an evil, and a ſymptom of original ſin.* To *factions*, as the Reviewer inſidiouſly ſtiles them, England owes her liberty; and to *religious feuds*, as they are called, all the moderation that Churchmen poſſeſs. God forbid then that High Churchmen ſhould ever expel ſuch *evils*, when liberty and toleration muſt probably be the companions of their retreat.

The Reviewer terminates his conſideration of the claim of the Diſſenters on the juſtice of their country with an obſervation, which cannot be too ſtrongly reprobated. "The excluſions, however," ſays he, "of the Corporation and the Teſt Acts "hardly amount to incapacities, becauſe they de- "clare no incapacities, but ſuch which the indi- "vidual hath *in his own power, at any time, to* "*efface* *." Gracious heaven! can ſuch deteſtable language be aſcribed to a holy prelate, to the teacher of a religion, for which every other ſect is to be humbled? Is conſcience moulded at our will, and are its dictates within our power? Would it not be an inſult to tell a man, excluded by his poverty from ſitting in parliament, that his excluſion hardly amounted to an incapacity, becauſe he had it *in his own power at any time to efface it*, by buying a ſufficient eſtate? The pious mind is ſtruck with horror

* Review, p. 27.

at the introduction of the ſame abominable poſition into the reſolutions of the *holy fathers* of the archdeaconry of York. They declared, "that the complaint urged by the Diſſenters, of being incapacitated for offices of truſt, honour, and emolument, is unfounded and unjuſt; this incapacity ariſing from *their own voluntary ſeparation* from our eſtabliſhment, to which they were previouſly aware that ſuch offices were *excluſively* annexed." Lamentable indeed muſt be the relaxed ſyſtem of morality, which can dictate ſuch ſentiments! If the Diſſenters were poſſeſſed of the ſame politic pliability, which has diſgraced too many of the eſtabliſhed clergy, and like them could ſwear allegiance to a king, and then preach principles * ſubverſive of his right to the

* Sir Simon Harcourt, as counſel for Sacheverell before the Houſe of Lords, deſcribed the ſituation of his client in the following ſtrong expreſſions:—"What evidence will your lordſhips expect he ſhould produce to clear himſelf? He has ſhewn his ſubmiſſion to the Revolution, from the firſt moment his years made him capable of doing ſo. He has given all the public teſtimonies of his fidelity and affection to the laſt reign, as well as the preſent, which the government has at any time required from the moſt ſuſpected perſons. He has taken the oath of allegiance, ſigned the aſſociation, and took the aſſociation. *'Tis a miſerable caſe any man is in*, if, after he has taken the abjuration, the utmoſt which is required, he ſhall ſtill be told, he hath indeed abjured the Pretender, but hath *not yet forgot him.*" In that miſerable caſe, however, was Sacheverell, and the ſentence of the Houſe of Lords told him in pretty ſtrong terms, that though he had *abjured* the Pretender, he had not yet *forgot* him.

crown,

crown*, it is moſt true, that they needed not to have ſolicited a repeal of the teſt laws, for each individual might, *at any time*, have effaced the incapacity.

Behold here the fatal effects of a relaxed education, and of teaching in our univerſities, that the moſt ſolemn engagements are but forms. When a youth of twelve years of age is entered of the univerſity of Oxford, he is obliged to ſubſcribe his unfeigned aſſent and conſent to the thirty-nine articles; articles which he had probably never read, or which, if he had read, he could not poſſibly underſtand; and this too, when he is not ſuppoſed to be of ſufficient age even to acknowledge the king's ſupremacy (which, to make the abſurdity complete, is *contained in one of them*) or to give the ſecurity of an oath, that he will obey the ſtatutes of the univerſity; for thus runs the ſtatute:—" Quotquot autem in matriculam " univerſitatis redigendi accedunt, ſi *decimum ſextum* " *ſuæ ætatis annum attigerint, articulis fidei & reli-* " *gionis ſubſcribant, & de agnoſcendo primatu regiæ* " *majeſtatis; nec non de fidelitate univerſitati exhibendâ*; " ſtatutis, privilegiis, & conſuetudinibus ejuſdem

* In 1692, Biſhop Burnet ſays, " And it muſt be confeſſed " that the behaviour of *many clergymen* gave atheiſts a great ad- " vantage: they had taken the oaths, and read the prayers for " the preſent government; they obſerved the orders for public " faſts and thankſgivings; and yet they ſhewed in many places " their averſion to our eſtabliſhment but too viſibly.—This made " many conclude, that the clergy were a ſort of men, that would " *ſwear and pray, even againſt their conſciences*, rather than " loſe their benefices; and by conſequence that they were go- " verned by intereſt, and not by principle." Hiſtory of his own Times, vol. ii. p. 101.

" obſervandis juxta formam hactenus uſitatam, cor-
" porale juramentum præſtent. Quod ſi *infra de-*
" *cimum ſextum & ſupra duodecim ætatis annum exti-*
" *terint, articulis fidei & religionis duntaxat ſubſcri-*
" *bent*, & in matriculam redigentur. Quod ſi
" duodecim non exceſſerint, in matriculam dun-
" taxat referentur," &c.

At the univerſity of Cambridge, where they have, in the courſe of ages, diſcovered that even batchelors of arts are not capable of underſtanding the thirty-nine articles, ſuch ſubſcription is not impoſed at admiſſion; but the ſanction of an oath is trifled with in a moſt ſhocking manner. The oath taken on matriculation; by an old ſtatute, made in 1544, is in theſe words:—" Cancellario procancellario-
" que academiæ Cantabrigienſis, quatenus jus
" faſque eſt et pro ordine in quo fuerim, quamdiu
" in hac republica degam, comiter obtemperabo:
" leges, ſtatuta, mores approbatos, et privilegia
" Cantabrigienſis academiæ (quantum in me eſt)
" obſervabo: *pietatis & bonarum literarum pro-*
" *greſſum, et hujus academiæ ſtatum, honorem, digni-*
" *tatem tuebor* QUOAD VIVAM, *meoque ſuffragio &*
" *conſilio rogatus et non rogatus defendam*; ita me
" Deus adjuvet, & ſancta ejus evangelia."—In 1647, the following grace was paſſed; " Placet
" vobis, ut *in majorem poſterum cautelam jurantium &*
" *levamen*, hæc verba ſint annexa juramentis acade-
" miæ matriculationis, admiſſionis, creationis: Se-
" natus Cantabrigienſis decrevit & declaravit *eos*
" *omnes, qui monitionibus, correctionibus, mulctis &*
" *pœnis* ſtatutorum, legum, decretorum, ordina-
" tionum,

" tionum, injunctionum, & laudabilium conſuetu-
" dinum hujus academiæ, tranſgreſſoribus quovis
" modo incumbentibus, *humiliter ſe ſubmiſerint, nec*
" *eſſe, nec habendos eſſe perjurii reos.*"

And, with this ſtrange declaration annexed, the oath abovementioned has been taken ever ſince. Theſe teachers of morality begin their courſe of education, by firſt forcing their pupils to take an oath, couched in terms which they do not expect ſhould be ever kept, and then relieve them from all apprehenſions on the ſcore of perjury, by annexing a ſalvo, that if they perform *a part only* of what they have ſworn to perform in the whole, *their rulers at Cambridge* will not ſay they are perjured! Laymen purſued a more dignified and moral line of conduct at the Revolution; they altered the oath impoſed by the Act of Uniformity, by wholly omitting the clauſe that declared it unlawful to bear arms, in any caſe, againſt the king; not by tacking a ſalvo, that thoſe who took the oath, and broke that part of it, "*nec eſſe nec habendos eſſe perjurii reos.*"—" Youth is the great opportunity of life,
" which ſettleth and fixeth moſt men either in a
" good or bad courſe; and the impreſſions, eſpe-
" cially bad impreſſions, then made, are uſually
" laſting. Youth is alſo a time of innocence,
" when men have horror for vice, which they
" never commit at firſt, without offering violence
" to themſelves. The firſt and moſt natural
" thoughts of man are to be honeſt and juſt, and
" reaſonable, as the beſt things he can do for his
" own ſake; and it is the influence of ill example,

" and

" and of the common practice of the world,
" which, for the moſt part, changes his ſentiments,
" and puts him upon ill actions. But the natural
" innocence of youth being once broken in upon,
" man by degrees grows hardened and impudent
" in wickedneſs, and commits it without ſhame or
" remorſe. Nothing, therefore, has ſo direct a ten-
" dency to debauch the *world*, as to debauch the
" *youth*; *and the earlier, the more effectual*; for
" thereby innocence and virtue may be ſo effaced,
" as in a little time to leave no memory or trace of
" them, no more than Quartilla in Petronius Ar-
" biter had, who, though a young woman, *did not*
" *remember that ſhe had ever been a maid* *."

* Independent Whig, vol. i. p. 135.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER VI.

The arbitrary Principles on which the Teſt Laws are defended, ſtated and anſwered; and the Proteſtant Diſſenters ſhewn to be loyal and peaceable Subjects.

THE main ground on which the preſent teſt laws are defended, is contained in the third reſolution of the clergy of London, aſſembled at Sion College, couched in the following general terms, viz. "That every civil ſociety has a perfect right, "inherent in itſelf, to *preſcribe the terms on which "its members ſhall be admitted to places of truſt and "power*; and conſequently, that no individual can "have a right inconſiſtent with that public right *." In general let us admit the propoſition to be true; but may we aſk theſe grey-bearded politicians, whether a civil ſociety has a right to preſcribe, as the terms on which its ſubjects ſhall be (not *admitted* but) *capable to be* admitted into places of truſt, that they ſhall each give up his right of ſelf-preſervation in caſes of extreme danger; his right to reſiſt the tyranny of governors (as was exacted in Charles the Second's reign by Churchmen) or, which is the corner-ſtone of the claim of the Diſ-

* See reſolutions of the county of Warwick, of Mancheſter, Glouceſter, &c. to the ſame import.

ſenters, his right to worſhip God in the way he thinks will be moſt acceptable. If they cannot anſwer in the affirmative, their reſolution does not reach the caſe of the Diſſenters. The ſame principle operates on the minds of High Churchmen, in their defence of the ſacramental teſt, as governed the conduct of Nebuchadnezzar when he ſet up his golden image. In one caſe it was required, that perſons *in office* ſhould fall down and worſhip the falſe God which he had ſet up; in the other it is required that they ſhall worſhip the true God in a way which they conceive to be unacceptable to him. The only difference lies in this: that, in England, a refuſal to comply with the unjuſt decree is puniſhed with a brand of infamy; in Babylon, it conducted the offenders to the fiery furnace.

Mr. Burke, in his Reflections on the French Revolution, countenances this error, when treating of the rights of men in ſociety, he ſays, they "are "*their advantages*; and theſe rights are often in "balances between differences of good, in com- "promiſes ſometimes between good and evil, and "ſometimes between evil and evil. Political reaſon "is a computing principle, adding, ſubtracting, "multiplying, and dividing morally, and not me- "taphyſically or mathematically, true moral deno- "minations." From this ſublime paſſage I collect, that when man enters into ſociety, and becomes a civil ſocial being, all the direct original rights which he enjoyed in a ſtate of nature are deſtroyed, and *he has no rights left but the advantages*

*for which civil ſociety was formed**. The argument muſt amount to this, or it amounts to nothing, for we need not be told, that a man has a right to the advantages for which civil ſociety was formed; and the only queſtion is, whether in the ſocial ſtate he does ſtill reſerve to himſelf ſome rights, which governors can neither compromiſe nor balance.

The primary object of every government ought to be the ſecurity of the perſons and property of thoſe individuals who ſubmit to it. In order to effect this, every man brings into the aggregate ſtock certain rights, which he poſſeſſed in a ſtate of nature, but he brings them ſubject to the ſame reſtrictions under which he exerciſed them in that ſtate; and theſe rights, ſo reſtricted, may be modified and arranged by the ſociety ſo as beſt to promote the great object of the union. For example, in a ſtate of nature, every man defended himſelf from injury by his own powers; he was himſelf the judge how far he ſhould puniſh the offender, and his own hands inflicted the puniſhment; but when he enters into ſociety he gives up thoſe rights; the general defence is then intruſted to perſons ſelected for that purpoſe; judges are appointed to examine into criminal charges, and apportion the puniſhments, and their ſentences are carried into execution by the offi-

* "To cloſe all," ſays Mr. Burke, in a ſubſequent publication, "the *pretended* rights of man, which have made this havoc, "*cannot* be the rights of the people; for to be a people, and "to have theſe rights, are things impoſſible: the one ſuppoſes "the *preſence*, the other the *abſence*, of a ſtate of civil ſociety." Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs, p. 139.

cers

cers of the public. In this manner the happineſs of each individual is much advanced, his perſon and property better ſecured from violence, and juſtice more impartially adminiſtered, and more certainly executed. His right, in common with others, to be protected by the community, is not therefore a civil right, ariſing merely out of the ſocial ſtate, for it ſprung out of, and is co-extenſive with, thoſe natural rights which he originally ſurrendered.

But when man enters into ſociety, he is not ſtripped of *all* the rights which he enjoyed in a ſtate of nature. Thus his right of ſelf-defence, as Mr. Burke acknowledges, is neceſſarily and unalienably attached to the perſon of the individual, and though ſometimes dormant, is never deſtroyed. And the Revolution is another glorious proof that Engliſhmen have other rights, beſides the *advantages* for which ſociety was formed; for the right to reſiſt a tyrannical government certainly never could be ſurrendered to ſociety, or dependent on its inſtitutions; ſtill leſs could it be an *advantage* derived from it, being itſelf the ultimate ſecurity of all its advantages. The exerciſe of it is inconſiſtent with the exiſtence of government, and can be juſtified only on the ſuppoſition that the governing powers are forfeited and gone. This important right Mr. Burke, not indeed very conſiſtently, admits was *gravely* and *decorouſly* vindicated by the people of England at the Revolution. In like manner, the right of every man to worſhip God in his own way could not be given up when he became

became incorporated in ſociety, and the rights of the ſociety cannot be more extenſive than the aggregate of thoſe which were ſurrendered by the individuals; conſequently the governing power could never claim any juriſdiction over the opinions of its ſubjects, or puniſh or *reſtrain* them in any manner, or on any pretence whatever. The right of private judgment does not ſpring out of, and is not in the ſmalleſt degree affected by, the civil inſtitutions of ſociety, but remains to *ſocial* man, in the ſtricteſt ſenſe, a *natural* right, which cannot be alienated, or admit of compromiſe, with either good or evil. In a ſtate of ſociety, as well as in a ſtate of nature, the individual muſt be in the *conſtant exerciſe* of it; and in this reſpect it differs from the right of ſelf-preſervation, which in a ſtate of ſociety revives only when the magiſtrate cannot afford protection to the individual; and from the right of reſiſtance, which lies dormant, until through the miſconduct of the governing power, the objects for which the individuals aſſociated can be no longer attained.

Having advanced thus far in the argument, it will not be difficult to detect the fallacy of the following reſolution of the clergy of the archdeaconry of Cheſter, viz. that, "to inſiſt upon natural "claims to civil offices, is to advance a palpable "abſurdity; becauſe no member of any ſociety "can have any civil rights, except ſuch are con-"veyed to him by the laws of that ſociety." It ſeems then, according to theſe clerical politicians, that at the inſtant when a man enters into ſociety, like a ſnake that ſloughs off its ſkin, he becomes a

new

new creature; he is changed from a ſolitary into a ſocial being, and all thoſe rights which he had in a ſtate of nature being deſtroyed, he acquires other new ones, which have no connection with thoſe he enjoyed before.

I admit that no man has a natural claim to any *particular* office; becauſe being made up of the ſurrendered rights of many individuals beſides himſelf, they all would have as good a claim to it as he; but this is not a fair ſtatement of the queſtion; for the claim of the Diſſenters extends to a *capacity* only to hold thoſe, to which the magiſtrate, or his fellow citizens, in whom the power of filling them is veſted, may think fit to nominate them. Now, as religious opinions fall not under the juriſdiction of the civil government, they can make men neither fit nor unfit to occupy public civil employments; and therefore ought not to be conſidered in the diſtribution of them.

Before the individual entered into ſociety, he was his own ſoldier, his own lawgiver, and his own judge; and he never intended to incapacitate himſelf, or, in other words, to give up the government of himſelf and his concerns, *wholly* out of his own controul. In conſequence of what he had ſurrendered, he ſtood upon an equal footing with others, who had given up no more; and the right which he had placed in the common ſtock, that it might be exerciſed in the beſt manner, for his own advantage, he expected to be impartially delegated back to him, along with the rights of others, whenever he ſhould be thought, by the proper judges,

judges, qualified to exerciſe them. The diſtribution of offices is not a diſtribution of *favours*, depending on the mere diſcretion or caprice of the magiſtrate: every member of the ſociety has an intereſt in them, and has contributed ſomething towards them; they are partnerſhip concerns; and though they are moulded into their preſent forms by civil ſociety, they are compoſed, like the ſtate itſelf, of an aggregate of *natural* rights. Every man therefore has a *natural* claim, not to any particular office, but to a capacity to hold one, when he ſhall be thought qualified to fill it, whatever his religious opinions may be; and if he is diſqualified for thoſe opinions by the laws of the ſtate, he is unjuſtly treated.

I will agree therefore with Mr. Burke, that no individual has any direct original right to any ſpecific ſhare of power and direction in the management of the ſtate, for as he admits, civil ſociety is the offſpring of convention, and that convention muſt be founded on equality and juſtice. But every individual, who gave up his direct original right to govern himſelf, muſt be entitled to the advantages he has ſtipulated for in return, and unleſs it can be ſhewn that the convention upon which our government depends, contains different terms for Churchmen and Diſſenters, and, in ſhort, is neither equal nor juſt, the whole body of the Diſſenters ought not to be excluded by a *general* incapacitation, from all ſhare whatever in the government.

But there is another form in which this argument has been preſſed by High Churchmen. In ſubſtance the Reviewer puts it thus, that where a government is a juſt one, both in its principles and execution, and where religious ordinances are not profaned, nor the individual perſecuted for conſcience ſake, *ſelf-preſervation is the leading principle, which muſt govern the morality of the ſtate, and no claims of any of its ſubjects can be juſt and equitable, which are contrary to the ſtate's ſecurity.* There is more of the politician than the moraliſt in the manner of introducing the propoſition, and the terms in which it is conveyed ſeem to be wilfully obſcured *. Here the Reviewer aſſumes, what the Diſſenters certainly will not admit, that in conſequence of theſe laws no religious ordinance is profaned †, and no individual *perſecuted* for con-

* Review, p. 5.

† How admirable the conſiſtency of High Churchmen! While the act againſt occaſional conformity was in force, the horrid profanation of an holy ordinance was their conſtant cry; ſo repreſented *the Lower Houſe of Convocation* in 1704; ſo preached *Sacheverell*, and ſo argued *Sherlock:* but *their* object was to retain the act againſt occaſional conformity, and exclude Diſſenters *wholly* from offices. *Now*, the act againſt occaſional conformity having been repealed, ſo far from being a profanation, a perverſion, a grievance, or an evil, it is a *juſt, ſufficient, expedient, ſalutary, wiſe,* and *neceſſary* proviſion for preſervation of the public peace, the *grand ſecurity* of our preſent civil and eccleſiaſtical conſtitution; and the people of Mancheſter and its neighbourhood "approve and admire the *wiſdom of their anceſ-*" *tors*, in enacting the receiving the ſacrament of the Lord's "Supper, according to the uſage of the Church of England, as a "*ſufficient teſt* and *effectual ſafeguard* to their happy conſtitution "in Church and State."

ſcience

ſcience ſake; and he aſſumes alſo, what the Diſſenters will as certainly deny, that their claims are contrary to the ſtate's ſecurity, and that the government is juſtly adminiſtered, which lays them under this reſtraint.

This propoſition, apparently ſo guarded as to be in itſelf perfectly harmleſs, is yet ſo ingeniouſly applied as to defend every ſpecies of injuſtice in the execution of government. And what the Reviewer only craftily inſinuates, other High Churchmen, more honeſt, but leſs wily, have not ſcrupled to avow. For at a meeting of the clergy of the archdeaconry of Cheſter, held on the 15th of February, 1790, the Reverend Archdeacon Travis in the chair, it was reſolved:

I. "That every ſtate hath an inherent right to "require evidence of the opinions of thoſe whom "it ſhall employ in its offices of truſt and power, "whether they are friendly or hoſtile to the conſti- "tution which it hath eſtabliſhed; and that this "right ariſes not merely from the laws which may "have been enacted by that ſtate, but *from that "principle of ſelf-preſervation* which belongs to "communities, as well as to individuals, and which "is *antecedent and ſuperior to all law.*

II. "That *upon the ſame principle*, every ſtate "hath a right to declare, what ſhall be deemed a "ſufficient proof or teſt, whether ſuch opinions are "or are not friendly to its eſtabliſhments."

Here it ſeems to have been taken for granted, that the right of ſelf-preſervation, belonging to communities is only co-extenſive with the ſelf-preſer-

vation, belonging to individuals, and, in that caſe, it would be a ſufficient anſwer to ſay, that ſelf-preſervation could never give to one individual a right to enquire into, or reſtrain, or puniſh, the religious opinions of another; for the rights of the ſociety, in other words the aggregate of ſurrendered rights, can never amount to more than thoſe which were ſurrendered. Self-preſervation may now become in extreme caſes the ruling principle of the community, as it was before of each of the individuals who compoſed it, but it can be carried no further than the individual might have carried it; and as he could neither puniſh nor *reſtrain*, nor require evidence of religious opinions, for ſelf-preſervation, ſo neither can the ſtate. But if theſe clerical politicians ſhould contend, that the principle of ſelf-preſervation is not to be confined within *any limits*, it then follows, that every ſpecies of injuſtice and wickedneſs is juſtifiable for the preſervation of the ſtate, or its laws; and, if juſtifiable, muſt be ſubmitted to by its ſubjects. Upon ſuch a principle the worſt government on earth muſt be allowed to endure for ever. Men indeed are naturally inclined to ſubmit patiently and *long* to oppreſſive governments; and nothing ſhort of a *neceſſity*, real or imaginary, can impel them to reſiſtance. When therefore a government is become weak and inefficient, through the errors or vices of thoſe who have adminiſtered it, the ſuppoſed preſervation of the ſtate, or in other words, of *power*, neceſſarily leads to the oppreſſion of its ſubjects; and the more weak and inefficient, the more muſt they be oppreſſed, to make them

peaceably

peaceably ſubmit. Tranſport to Turkey the reverend clergy of the archdeaconry of Cheſter, and put Archdeacon Travis in the chair, and they may reſolve, upon the principle of ſelf-preſervation ſo underſtood, that the profeſſors of Chriſtianity are not worthy to lick the duſt from the feet of the diſciples of Mahomet, and that the property and lives of millions of people ought to depend on the caprice of a tyrant. Place them in Dahomey, and they may reſolve that the monſter, clothed in the garb of ſovereignty, who there delights in the miſeries of his ſubjects, has a right to ſhed their blood in honour to his gods, and ornament his palace with their ſkulls.

The *reaſons* given by the High Church party for laying the reſtraints complained of on the Proteſtant Diſſenters, partake of the ſame arbitrary ſpirit which we have ſeen to govern the arguments, by which they maintain their *right* to impoſe them. It is ſaid, that Diſſenters ought to be excluded from offices, becauſe they muſt neceſſarily "miſ-"uſe" power, if they were poſſeſſed of it, being *diſloyal ſubjects, and enemies to the public peace in Church and State.*

In defiance of the wiſe and liberal reſolution of the corporation of Leiceſter, "That all the Diſſen-"ters urge reſpecting their loyalty to their king, "and their attachment to the ſtate, is *inſignificant*, "becauſe no ſtate does, or can, reward its ſubjects "for obedience; and that all the Diſſenters urge

" reſpecting their own moderation is *abſurd*, be-
" cauſe no men give themſelves bad characters," I will venture, in anſwer to this charge, to recall the attention of my readers to a few hiſtorical facts. In the reign of Charles II. at the very time when the Teſt Act was paſſed, the Diſſenters were ranked among the zealous aſſertors of the Proteſtant religion and the liberties of their country; they were then eſteemed ſincere friends to the public peace in Church and State, by thoſe who beſt knew their temper and principles, and the dangers meant to be guarded againſt by the law they had themſelves made. From the time of paſſing the Teſt Act till the abdication of the laſt unfortunate prince of the Houſe of Stuart, the Diſſenters were not leſs diſtinguiſhed for their ſteady oppoſition to the tyrannical meaſures of the Court, than ſince that time for their zealous attachment to the conſtitution, as ſettled at the Revolution. Enemies to kings who claimed a delegation from God to oppreſs mankind, they have chearfully hazarded their lives to ſupport a race of monarchs, ſeated on the throne by the voice of the people. Such conduct cannot juſtly convey ſuſpicions of diſloyalty to a monarch of that race. When paſſive obedience and non-reſiſtance were the avowed doctrines, not only of the Church, but of its clergy alſo, they ſuffered perſecution for holding thoſe principles on which the Revolution was afterwards founded. From that great æra, when the rights of mankind were vindicated againſt a tyrant, and the people of England dared to aſſert their freedom, to the preſent moment, not a ſingle

a ſingle inſtance can be pointed out, in which their loyalty to the monarch on the throne, or their affection to the government, can be juſtly called in queſtion. Nay, in two inſtances happening very recently before this charge was made, they had ſignally manifeſted their attachment to the *prerogatives of the crown*, and, as ſome conceived, had in ſo doing betrayed the rights of the people.

But we are told that by the repeal of the Teſt Act, the influence of the Diſſenters " will be in-
" creaſed, while their prejudices will remain entire.
" Their prejudices will incite them to uſe their
" increaſed influence, firſt for the reformation of
" religion, and then, *ſince their politics are for the*
" *moſt part ſingular*, for the bettering of the ſtate.
" Government will have thrown down *the beſt bar-*
" *rier it had to oppoſe to innovation*, and the work
" of reformation will go on, without obſtruction,
" *till one ſtone will not be left ſtanding upon another,*
" *of the admired fabric of the Britiſh conſtitution**."
The politics of the Diſſenters, which appear thus *ſingular* in the eyes of High Churchmen, are neither more nor leſs than thoſe which were honoured with the ſanction of Mr. Locke, Lord Somers, and thoſe Whigs who accompliſhed the Revolution: and the only bettering of the ſtate, which *ſome of them* wiſh for, is a reform in the repreſentation of the people in the Houſe of Commons!

The Reviewer's prognoſtication of the ruin of our civil government, as the *neceſſary* conſequence

* Review, p. 59.

of the repeal of the Teſt Laws, I confeſs ſtruck me with admiration. But recollecting that moſt of the arguments of our modern High Churchmen, however new the dreſs in which they are produced, may be traced back to the times when paſſive obedience and non-reſiſtance triumphed in the State as well as the Church, and the perſecution of ſectaries was generally practiſed, as well as eſtabliſhed, and have been handed down in regular ſucceſſion, through Parker, Sacheverell, Sherlock, and Warburton, I referred back to ancient authorities: and the following extract from Sacheverell's ſermon, will fully explain the correſponding paſſage in the Review. "Whoſoever preſumes to innovate, alter, or miſrepreſent any point in the "articles of the faith of the Church, ought to be "arraigned as a traitor to our State: *heterodoxy in "the doctrines of the one naturally producing, and al-"moſt neceſſarily inferring, rebellion and high treaſon "in the other* *." The reader will pleaſe alſo to obſerve the happy coincidence of ſentiment manifeſted in this paſſage and the remark of the Reviewer in another place, that "too much reaſon "was given to ſuſpect, that *the principles of a "Nonconformiſt in religion, and a republican in po-"litics, were inſeparately connected!*" In the race of bigotry then, may the Reviewer contend for the prize with SACHEVERELL: for SHERLOCK was aſhamed of what he wrote, and WARBURTON could be ſometimes candid.

* Review, p. 29.

The Reviewer proceeds to tell us, that the actual feelings of the individual Nonconformists of the present times are such, that they "might pass for a "loyal body, friends to the public peace;" but that the disposition of their "leaders" make up the whole character of the party, and Dr. Price (who alone is cited in this place) has unfortunately shewn such an impassioned fondness for the democratic form, as is inconsistent with genuine loyalty to any king, or attachment to any government, but a mere democracy, and "places the glory of "the American states in their emancipation from "*lords*, from *bishops*, and from *kings*; and their lead-"ers" (who are not named) "are used to treat the "subject of civil liberty in a manner that hath given "too much reason to suspect that the principles "of a Nonconformist in religion, and a republican "in politics, are *inseparably* united *." It is impossible, without making longer extracts than my plan will allow, to convey to the reader a true idea of the malignant insinuations † in which the argument is dressed up, or the parade and ostentation with which sentence is passed on the whole body of Nonconformists; who, upon the evidence of this extract from the works of Dr. Price only,

* P. 28, &c.

† Yet Mr. Madan has cited with approbation no less than five pages of them, in his letter to Dr. Priestley! Well might Archbishop Tillotson say to a scrupulous Doctor of his province, "Doctor, Doctor! *charity* is above *rubrics*." But where are our *Tillotsons* now?

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are adjudged guilty of favouring a democratic form of government.

The admiſſion, that the Nonconformiſts of the preſent time *might paſs* for a loyal body, might have been couched in more handſome terms, though the conceſſion, wreſted from a High Churchman *in any terms*, ought not to be deſpiſed. But if the individual Nonconformiſts do conſtitute a loyal body, it reſts with the Reviewer to ſhew, that they ever were connected together for any party views, and what the character of that party was, and then that Dr. Price (who alone is named in this paſſage) was really its leader, before his writings can be cited to prove what the principles of the individual Nonconformiſts may poſſibly be *hereafter*, but certainly were not, as the Reviewer himſelf allows, when he wrote. The truth is, that it does not ſeem decided among High Churchmen which will beſt ſuit their argument, that the Nonconformiſts ſhould, or ſhould not, be conſidered as a *party* regularly formed. And therefore, with admirable conſiſtency, the Reviewer ſometimes honours them with the appellation of "*the party*," and ſometimes denies them to be one; thus in one place he even ſays, that they have *always* been "firmly confederated" for the deſtruction of the eſtabliſhed Church; and yet we learn in another, that they are diſcordant ſects, *incapable of uniting* with one another: in ſhort, ſometimes it is "very like an ouzle," ſometimes "very like a whale." The Nonconformiſts certainly have had no general bond of union, but that which

which ariſes from mutual oppreſſion and mutual ſufferings. So far only as the repeal of the Teſt Laws may be ſaid to make them *a party*, can that denomination be juſtly applied to them. From the Revolution to this day, they have never aſſociated for *any other* purpoſe; and whether it be prudent in the Church at this preſent moment to raiſe their temporary aſſociation to the dignity of *a party*, and thereby give them conſequence and power, is well worthy the conſideration of the Reviewer, and thoſe who think like him. With regard to civil liberty, they have never been formally aſſociated; and their general unanimity upon that ſubject has ariſen, to their honour be it ſpoken, more from the principles of the individuals, than any concert with each other. As a party then united only to get the Teſt Laws repealed, how can the principles of any one man among them, upon a point entirely diſtinct from the ſole object of their union, be attributed to the whole body, who confeſſedly at preſent do not entertain his ſentiments? For after Dr. Price's works ſhall have wrought this reformation, and republicaniſm ſhall have become the creed of Diſſenters, their loyalty to his majeſty and the eſtabliſhed government up to 1787, muſt ſtill be univerſally acknowledged. When their caſe was publiſhed, it is admitted they might "paſs for a loyal body;" and the aſſertion in it remains unimpeached, the bulk of them then being Nonconformiſts, *without being* republicans. So that, according to this conſiſtent writer, the *inſeparable* union had not taken place, and Nonconformiſts

ſtill obſtinately perſiſted in their affection to monarchical government.

The ſentiments of Dr. Price himſelf reſt not upon deduction or inference, and the late publication of extracts from a ſermon preached by him to the congregation at Newington Green ſo long ago as in the reign of George the Second proves beyond all doubt, that at his entrance into life he felt, as the Diſſenters in general have been taught to feel, a warm affection for his country, and an enthuſiaſtic admiration of the glorious fabric of the Britiſh conſtitution. Deſcribing this country, he calls it, "a land where peace, plenty, knowledge, and liberty abound and flouriſh. A land "which has *the beſt conſtitution*, the beſt laws, the "beſt king, and the beſt religion in the world *." When the ardour of youth was abated, and his judgment matured by age, he ſtill preferred the ſyſtem of government under which we have the happineſs to live. In his "Obſervations on the "Nature of Civil Liberty †," he ſays, "In order to

* This little piece, publiſhed by Rivington, price only three pence, is entitled, "Britain's Happineſs, and its full poſſeſſion of "Civil and Religious Liberty briefly ſtated and proved by the "late Rev. Dr. Richard Price." It has been publiſhed by an enemy in order to injure the character of its author, but is a truly valuable performance. The Diſſenters ought to wiſh it univerſally circulated and read; for as Dr. Price's works have been made the ſtandard of *their* opinions, it ſhews that, in 1759 at leaſt, they bore *no ill-will* to the eſtabliſhment; and that when this country was engaged in foreign wars, they, ſo far from ſeeking to take advantage of its calamities, gave its rulers their moſt hearty and affectionate ſupport.

† Thirteenth edition, publiſhed in 1776, p. 10.

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" form *the moſt perfect conſtitution of government*, " there may be the beſt reaſons for joining to ſuch " a body of *repreſentatives* an *hereditary* council, " conſiſting of men of the firſt rank in the ſtate, " with a *ſupreme executive magiſtrate* at the head of " all. This will form uſeful checks in a legiſlature, " and contribute to give it vigour, union, and " diſpatch, without infringing liberty; for as long " as that part of a government which repreſents " the people is a *fair repreſentation*, and alſo has a " negative on all public meaſures, together with " the ſole power of impoſing taxes and originating " ſupplies, the eſſentials of liberty will be preſerv- " ed. We make it our boaſt in this country that " this is our conſtitution: I will not ſay with how " much reaſon!" Is it not apparent that Dr. Price here had in view the Britiſh conſtitution, as the moſt perfect model that could be deviſed; with one only improvement, viz. a more equal repreſentation of the people in the Houſe of Commons? If there is any thing *republican* in that wiſh, the preſent miniſter muſt come in for his ſhare of the odium, for he alſo has avowed ſentiments in favour of that reform, and pledged himſelf to ſupport it. Here then Doctor Price has given the moſt unequivocal aſſurance, that " his impaſſioned fondneſs for the democratic " form" did not extend beyond a fondneſs for a limited *monarchy*.

In the year 1784 Dr. Price, and moſt of the Diſſenters, exerted themſelves in ſupport of *the prerogatives of the crown*, which they conceived to be uncon-

unconſtitutionally invaded. The preſent miniſter cannot have forgotten that *then* they ſhewed no diſlike to kingly power; yet he had not the generoſity, in any of the debates, to repay his obligations by even *doing juſtice* to their political character, and reſcuing it from the moſt groſs miſrepreſentations! No where, even in Dr. Price's Revolution Sermon, preached in 1789, which has given ſo much offence to Mr. Burke, is there a ſingle word or expreſſion, which ſhews he felt a predilection for a democratic form of government.

In the Appendix to the Review, the omiſſion of the names of thoſe *leaders*, from whoſe works the *inſeparable* connection of nonconformity and republicaniſm is to be inferred, is in ſome degree ſupplied. Three extracts are there given from Mr. Robinſon's "Plan of Lectures on Nonconformity;" and though brought forward with great parade, they are in themſelves ſo trivial, that if it were not to expoſe the miſerable ſhifts to which High Churchmen are reduced, in their attempt to fix a charge of diſaffection to the Britiſh government on the Proteſtant Diſſenters, I ſhould not trouble my readers with them here. "Deſpotiſm," ſays Mr. Robinſon, "is the deſideratum of *moſt* princes;" and ſo it certainly may be, without being the deſideratum of our's. "So much epiſcopacy, ſo much deſpotiſm, "is a certain truth," ſays the ſame Mr. Robinſon; and ſo it may be, and yet the writer be a very loyal ſubject: for inſtance, he may think, that the Britiſh conſtitution, moſt perfect *in itſelf*, is debaſed by the ſlaviſh principles of the hierarchy. The next is

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the ſtrongeſt expreſſion: " Princes know no hereſy " but patriotiſm, and no orthodoxy but deſpotiſm." In juſtice to Mr. Robinſon, it ſhould be remembered here, that this is extracted from a book, which is, as he tells us himſelf, " an Analyſis, an " Index of Hiſtory, or a kind of Chapter of Con- " tents" only. It contains the heads of lectures to aſſiſt the memory of the lecturer, and to be filled up as circumſtances may require. But all men are inclined to abuſe power, and the obſervation is too generally true. Theſe extracts could not have occaſioned a ſuſpicion of Mr. Robinſon's loyalty in any breaſt but the Reviewer's, and we learn from the higheſt authority, that it is unfounded; for in the preface to the very work from which they are taken, publiſhed in 1781 (nine years before the Review) the author ſays: " My pleaſure has been " increaſed by obſerving *the happy conſtitution of our* " *government. Our mixed monarchy contains all the* " *excellencies, and provides againſt the evils of the* " *three ſorts of government, of which it is compound-* " *ed.*" The diſhoneſt trick in which the Reviewer is here detected is ſufficient to rouſe the indignation of any unprejudiced mind. For is it poſſible to conceive that with this paſſage before his eyes he could baſely cite other parts of the ſame work, in order to impreſs an opinion of Mr. Robinſon's diſaffection to the Britiſh government? Or can it be ſuppoſed, with the utmoſt ſtretch of charity, that the Reviewer did not ſin againſt better knowledge, when he thus falſely charged Dr. Price and Mr. Robinſon with being republicans in principle?

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The Reviewer alſo recommends a reference to Mr. S. Palmer's "Proteſtant Diſſenter's Cate-"chiſm," from which, however, he makes no extract. Mr. Palmer has anſwered the charge reſpecting himſelf, and declared himſelf a friend to a limited monarchy. How ſingularly unfortunate the Reviewer, in thus endeavouring unjuſtly to fix on the Diſſenters the character of republicans, from the writings of three of their miniſters, *every one* of whom has expreſsly repelled the imputation!

Not more fortunate have been thoſe advocates for the Church, who have cited, for the ſame purpoſe, the opinions of Dr. Prieſtley. In his "Familiar "Letters to the Inhabitants of Birmingham," he refutes this calumny, and ſays, "all my acquain-"tance know, that *I am a zealous friend of a limited* "*monarchy, ſuch as our conſtitution is.*" And he ſhews that ſuch have ever been his ſentiments, by referring to his "Lectures on the Study of Hiſtory "and General Policy," written without any view to controverſy, ſo long ago as when he was a tutor at the academy at Warrington*.

This calumny againſt the Diſſenters in general may be traced, like moſt others under which they have laboured, to the charitable offices of the prieſts of the eſtabliſhment. It is an approved recipe of their policy, when preſſed with argument in a *religious diſpute*, to endeavour to deſtroy the popularity of their opponents, by deſcribing them as enemies to the *political* conſtitution of their country. This

* Familiar Letters, p. 13, 88.

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art was practiſed by Dr. Sacheverell againſt the friends to Toleration; and Archdeacon Horſley, in his controverſy with Dr. Prieſtley, converted his arguments againſt *the Trinity* into "a declaration "of implacable enmity to *the conſtitution* *," and "ſentiments of hoſtility to the *political* conſtitution "of his country †."

A predilection for a republican form of government never was a diſtinguiſhing feature of the principles of the Diſſenters; ſo far from it, that in the diſſenting ſeminaries youth have been taught not only to *admire* the Britiſh conſtitution, as the moſt perfect form of government that human wiſdom ever deviſed, but to *love* and *reverence* it as a ſource of hitherto unrivalled happineſs to its ſubjects. And it is the opinion of many, who have good means of information, and have taken pains to aſcertain the fact, that there are fewer republicans among the Diſſenters, in proportion to their numbers, than among the members of the eſtabliſhment itſelf. Notwithſtanding this, the Diſſenters have been ſo ſucceſsfully branded with the odious appellation of "republicans," that many of their fellow-ſubjects, eſpecially thoſe moſt ignorant of their hiſtory and general principles, now conſider them as avowed enemies to the civil government of their country; and in the debates in the Houſe of Commons, they have been treated as little better than rebels and traitors.

* Tracts in Controverſy with Dr. Prieſtley, p. 410.

† Ibid. p. 434, cited at p. 34 of this work.

The Rev. Mr. Madan boldly aſſerts, that the principles of the *Preſbyterians*, including all the denominations of Proteſtant Diſſenters, are unqueſtionably republican *. If he means by this aſſertion that their principles teach them to be enemies to kingly government, he is certainly miſtaken; but if he annexes to the word ſome looſe indefinite meaning, ſuch as ſeems to have floated confuſedly in the brain of ſome of the dignitaries of the eſtabliſhment, it is impoſſible to anſwer the obſervation, until he thinks fit to give his own definition of it. But perhaps it may be thought politic for Churchmen to continue the uſe of it as a term of reproach and an opprobrious nick-name, which may occaſionally ſupply the want of argument; in that way Biſhop Horſley ſeems to have uſed it in the following paſſage. In anſwer to the Rev. Mr. Palmer's aſſertion, that a great body of Calviniſts concurred in the application of the Proteſtant Diſſenting Miniſters in 1772, "*upon a general principle* "*of liberty, diſliking any interference of the magiſtrate* "*in religious matters*," Biſhop Horſley ſays, "If "the fact be as Mr. Palmer ſtates it, I can only "lament that a *republican* principle ſhould ſo "ſtrongly have infected ſo reſpectable a branch of "the Chriſtian Church, as the Calviniſts are in my "eſtimation †." How the "diſliking any interfe-"rence of the magiſtrate in *religious* matters" implies a diſlike to monarchical government, the Bi-

* See before, p. 37.

† Tracts in Controverſy with Dr. Prieſtley, p. 396, 397.

ſhop has not thought fit to explain, this we know, that the ſame *republican* principle infected Biſhop Burnet, and Biſhop Hoadley, with other prelates of *Whiggiſh* times.

In refutation of a charge ſo weakly ſupported, the Diſſenters may appeal to the whole tenor of their public conduct, and to the teſtimonies of their princes, and the houſes of parliament. But, not adverting to more ancient documents, the public are in poſſeſſion of the moſt ſolemn declarations of their aſſociated bodies, of their loyalty and affection to the preſent government. The Committee appointed to conduct the application for the repeal of the Teſt Laws, publiſhed an addreſs to the people of England, dated the 11th of May, 1790, in which, in the name of the whole body of Diſſenters, they ſay:

"From the manner, however, in which our "application to parliament has been oppoſed, and "from the writings which, with ſo much virulence, "have appeared againſt us, it ſeems as if we were "regarded as diſloyal ſubjects. But we ſpurn with "indignation at this charge. It is unjuſt in the "higheſt degree to caſt ſuch a reproach upon per-"ſons, who have been uniformly and ardently de-"voted to the frame of our government, as ſet-"tled at the Revolution, and to the princes of the "houſe of Brunſwick. For the truth of this "aſſertion, we appeal to the whole of our conduct "for more than a century paſt. The two rebel-"lions, for example, of 1715 and 1745, could "not boaſt the ſupport of a ſingle Proteſtant Diſ-

" ſenter. Nor did we content ourſelves with a " negative loyalty, but engaged in active ſervices " for the preſervation of the ſovereign, and the " civil and religious liberties of the nation. In " theſe ſervices we expoſed ourſelves to the penal- " ties of the very laws we complain of. Juſtice " and gratitude would have required that theſe laws " ſhould then have been aboliſhed; but the only " return we received, was an indemnification for " our meritorious conduct, in daring to oppoſe " the enemies of the conſtitution of the Hanover " ſucceſſion.—*While ſuch has been the invariable* " *courſe of our behaviour, we cannot avoid expreſſing* " *our ſurprize and concern that we ſhould ſo often* " *be reproachfully branded with the name of republi-* " *cans. If there be any meaning in this term, as ma-* " *lignantly applied to us by our enemies, it muſt be in-* " *tended to denote that we wiſh to overturn the preſent* " *conſtitution, and to eſtabliſh a republic on the ruins* " *of the monarchical part of our government. But* " *every imputation of this kind we abſolutely diſclaim* " *and deny. The Diſſenters in no-wiſe deſerve the* " *appellation of republicans, but in common with all* " *the people of the kingdom; that is, in oppoſition to* " *arbitrary power. None can be more ſenſible than* " *we are of the excellence of the principles of our free* " *conſtitution, or more zealous for its preſervation and* " *continuance.*"

And in an addreſs to the people of England, voted by the Proteſtant Diſſenting Laymen and Miniſters for the Weſt Riding of the county of York, aſſembled at Wakefield on September the 1ſt, 1791, they

they declare in the ſtrongeſt terms, " their decided " preference for an hereditary monarchy," and affection to the conſtitution as ſettled at the Revolution. The late addreſs of the Proteſtant Diſſenters at Birmingham to the king, is declaratory of the ſame ſentiments. I will not trouble the reader with further references to, or extracts from the public proceedings of the Diſſenters. Enough has been already offered in refutation of one of the moſt groundleſs, but at the ſame time malignant calumnies, that ever even prieſts invented and put into circulation.

The charge of diſloyalty has been of late renewed againſt the Diſſenters, and Dr. Price in particular has been treated by Mr. Burke with great and undeſerved aſperity. In a ſermon, preached before the Revolution Society on the 4th of November, 1789, Dr. Price had enumerated, among the principles of the Revolution, the right of the people of England " to caſhier their kings for *miſconduct*." To all the Doctor's principles Mr. Burke has objected, but to this more than any other; and as to diſcuſs them all would lead into too large a field, I ſhall content myſelf with a few obſervations on this only.

However light or improper the expreſſion, the extent of the claim does not want the authority of high names to juſtify it. ' The Judgment of ' whole Kingdoms and Nations, concerning the ' Rights, Power, and Prerogative of Kings, and ' the Rights, Privileges, and Properties of the Peo- ' ple; ſhewing the Nature of Government," &c.

is a celebrated work; which, if not written by Lord Somers, has been always underſtood to ſpeak the genuine ſentiments of the Whigs of his time. It has gone through a great number of editions, and in the very title-page, which is very diffuſe, aſſerts 'the right of the people and parliament of Britain to reſiſt and deprive their kings, for *evil government*, by King Henry's charter,' &c.; and in the body of the work the ſame expreſſion is uſed, and the right deduced from "the common uſage of England, which is the "common law of England." In another place it is ſaid, "that the people may do themſelves juſtice "in caſe of *oppreſſion*" by the government.

Mr. Locke, the cotemporary of Lord Somers, wrote, in the reign of King William, his two treatiſes on government, with an expreſs view "*to eſtabliſh the throne* of our great reſtorer, our "preſent King William; *to make good his title in* "*the conſent of the people*; *which being the only one* "*of lawful governments, he has more fully and* "*clearly than any prince in Chriſtendom: and to* "*juſtify to the world the people of England, whoſe* "*love of their juſt and natural rights*, with their "reſolution to preſerve them, *ſaved the nation*, "when it was on the very brink of ſlavery and "ruin*." And he apologizes for anſwering Sir Robert Filmer's book, who had been long dead, becauſe "*the pulpit* of late years publickly owned

* See preface to his two treatiſes on Civil Government, Locke's Works, vol. ii. p. 137, edition 1777.

"his

" his doctrine, and made it *the current divinity of the* " *times.*" In order to ſhew that Mr. Locke's principles are vaſtly more broad and *democratic* than Dr. Price's, I will refer the reader to his chapter ' Of the Diſſolution of Government,' and for the preſent obſerve only, that at the concluſion of his ' Treatiſe on Civil Government' he expreſsly ſays, that the government may be forfeited by the *miſcarriages* of thoſe intruſted with the ſupreme power*. Theſe expreſſions are certainly more looſe than that uſed by Dr. Price; and yet experience has ſhewn that a well-regulated ſtate has nothing to apprehend from the pens of theoriſts. The diſciples of Lord Somers and Mr. Locke, during the courſe of a hundred years, have not, *in a ſingle inſtance*, excited reſiſtance, though no one will venture to affirm that there has been no *evil government*, or temporary *oppreſſion*, or that the adminiſtration of government has been without *miſcarriages*. Mr. Burke himſelf, in his letter to the ſheriffs of Briſtol, in 1770, when mentioning a writer, who, from

* Locke's Works, vol. ii. p. 311. Even King James the Firſt, in his ſpeech to the parliament in 1609, could ſay, " A king, govern- " ing in a ſettled kingdom, *leaves to be king*, and degenerates " into a tyrant, *as ſoon as he leaves off to rule according to his laws.*" Is Mr. Burke prepared to ſay as much? Mr. Locke reaſons thus: " Wherever law ends, tyranny begins, if the law be tranſgreſſed " to another's harm; and whoſoever in authority exceeds the " power given him by the law, and makes uſe of the force he " has under his command to compaſs that upon the ſubject " which the law allows not, ceaſes in that to be a magiſtrate: " and acting without authority, may be oppoſed as any other " man, who by force invades the right of another." Ibid. 295.

the multitude and ſpirit of the addreſſes in favour of the American war, drew an argument for the independence of America, ſays, " which (if the " fact were as he ſuppoſes) muſt be irreſiſti- " ble. For *I never knew* a writer on the the- " ory of government ſo partial to authority, as " not to allow that *the hoſtile mind* of the rulers " to the people, did fully juſtify a change of go- " vernment." Here we have not one word of a *grave* and *over-ruling* neceſſity, or of its being effected in a *grave* and *decorous* manner, to juſtify this change of government; and the expreſſion of the *hoſtile mind* of a ruler, will probably convey to an Engliſh ear as looſe and indefinite an idea, as his *miſconduct*. The ſtatute of the 6 Ann. c. vii. ſ. 1. is expreſſed in ſtill more general terms; for it enacts, that he who by adviſedly ſpeaking, or writing, aſſerts that the parliament cannot limit the ſucceſſion to the throne, (and thus caſhier a *whole race of kings*, without alluding either to *neceſſity*, *evil government*, *oppreſſion*, *miſconduct*, *miſcarriage*, or *hoſtile mind*) ſhall be guilty of high treaſon. It was Dr. Price's misfortune to live in times, when it was become faſhionable to trace back the path from liberty to paſſive obedience, and when, after the enjoyment of a free government for more than a century, we are obliged to "re-learn" its principles. There is, in the above paſſages, ſuch a perfect coincidence of ſentiment between the Whigs, to whom we are indebted for the Revolution, ſpeaking by the works of Mr. Locke, and the deſcendents of thoſe Whigs, ſpeaking through Mr.

Mr. Burke *in the year* 1770, and Dr. Price in 1789, that it ſeems unaccountable that any Whig, valuing himſelf upon conſiſtency, ſhould, in *the year* 1790, take offence at the latitude of Dr. Price's principle, though he may diſapprove of the expreſſions in which it is conveyed.

Mr. Burke, it appears, piques himſelf upon the conſiſtency of his political principles, and tells us expreſsly, that they are the ſame now as when he wrote the letter to the ſheriffs of Briſtol juſt alluded to. He muſt ſtill be of opinion then, that the *hoſtile mind* of the governor will juſtify the reſiſtance of the governed. He muſt ſtill be ready to anſwer, if any aſk him, what a free government is? "That for any practical purpoſe it is "what *the people* think ſo; and that *they, and not I,* "*are the natural, lawful, and competent judges of* "*this matter* *."

* I have often thought, that the beſt way to anſwer Mr. Burke's late writings on the French Revolution, would be to try the experiment upon them, which Mr. Locke recommended to be tried on Sir Robert Filmer's works. "For if any one," ſays Mr. Locke, "will be at the pains himſelf, in thoſe parts which "are here untouched, to *ſtrip Sir Robert's diſcourſes of the flouriſh* "*of doubtful expreſſions, and reduce his words to direct, poſitive,* "*intelligible propoſitions, and then compare them one with another,* "he will quickly be ſatisfied there was never ſo much glib non-"ſenſe put together in well-ſounding Engliſh. If he think it "not worth while to examine his works all through, *let him make* "*an experiment* in that part where he treats of uſurpation; and "let him try whether he can, with all his ſkill, make Sir Ro-"bert *intelligible, and conſiſtent with himſelf or common ſenſe.*" Preface to his two treatiſes on Civil Government, Locke's Works, vol. ii. p. 137.

Indeed

Indeed the ſyſtems of Dr. Price and Mr. Burke (as he ſtates his own *in* 1790) differ little from each other, when fairly contraſted. Dr. Price ſays, a king may be depoſed for *miſconduct*; Mr. Burke ſays, No! *every* miſconduct will not juſtify reſiſtance, but there muſt be a grave and over-ruling neceſſity accompanying it: in other words, there muſt be ſuch a groſs miſconduct, that the people, after weighing the inconveniences of reſiſtance, think it *neceſſary* to riſk them all, rather than ſubmit longer to their oppreſſor. After Mr. Burke has admitted (what he cannot deny) that the people muſt be the judges of the exiſtence of that neceſſity, the only difference between the two poſitions is, that what is expreſſed in the one muſt neceſſarily be implied from the terms of the other: for a king *cannot* be depoſed without the concurrence of a majority of his ſubjects, either in number or ſtrength; and whenever that concurrence is obtained, the neceſſity is, on Mr. Burke's principles, arrived, *becauſe they think it is.*

But admitting that a material difference did actually exiſt, and to the extent inſiſted on, it ſhould be conſidered that Dr. Price wrote as a theoriſt, Mr. Burke as a politician. Dr. Price took the Revolution as an example, under *a general rule*, and then laid down the general rule itſelf; Mr. Burke, conſidering himſelf as ſtating under a conſtitution, *what that* conſtitution taught, could not go beyond the particular inſtance, which had ſpecifically happened. This diſtinction renders all his reaſoning from Sacheverell's trial in the 'Appeal' irrelevant to the

queſtion

queſtion between *them*. But ſince 1688 there has been another revolution, by which the American provinces are become independent ſtates, and recognized as ſuch by this country, ſo that even as a politician he ought to have enlarged his rule. The principles of the ancient Whigs, as he is pleaſed to narrow them, juſtify the Revolution of 1688, "*only* "upon the *neceſſity* of the caſe; as the *only* means "left for the recovering of that *ancient* conſtitu- "tion, formed by the *original contract* of the "Britiſh ſtate, as well as for the future preſerva- "tion of the *ſame* government *." And yet, to ſhew how conſiſtent Mr. Burke is, he tells us in the 'Appeal,' that "he conſidered the Ameri- "cans as ſtanding at that time, and in that con- "troverſy, *in the ſame relation to England, as Eng- "land did to James II. in* 1688. He believed "that they had taken up arms *from one motive* "*only, that is, our taxing them without their con- "ſent* †," &c. It follows therefore that the coloniſts were juſtified in reſiſting the mother country, becauſe they ſtood *in the ſame relation* to England, as England did to James II. in 1688, although they acted upon motives *completely diſſimilar*. Thus the hiſtory of England affords *two* inſtances, in which Mr. Burke himſelf admits reſiſtance to the governing power was juſtifiable, and yet he gives us a rule applicable to *one* of them only. In the one caſe there was a neceſſity, as the only means of

* Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs, p. 57.

† P. 38.

recovering

recovering the *ancient* conſtitution, and preſerving in future the *ſame* government; in the other there was a neceſſity, as the only means of *deſtroying* the ancient conſtitution, and erecting for the future a *different* governnment. The choice of deſtroying or preſerving the old government muſt certainly reſt with the people in ſuch emergencies; and becauſe the Whigs of England preferred their *old* form of government, it does not follow that the patriots of France would not have been juſtified in *wholly deſtroying* theirs. It certainly is not for Mr. Burke to make the objection, ſince he admits that the Americans were juſtified in doing ſo.

Againſt Mr. Burke the Diſſenters have to complain of unfair uſage; they expected it at the hands of High Churchmen, but from a ſtateſman, profeſſing himſelf to be a Whig, they might hope to have experienced ſome candour, and even ſome indulgence. After it is admitted that the obnoxious poſitions imputed to Dr. Price, in his 'Reflections 'on the late Revolution in France,' are ever ſo dangerous and inimical to the preſent government, there is no evidence before the public that they make part of the general creed of the Diſſenters. The ſermon was preached before the Revolution Society, which is not a Diſſenting Aſſociation, and at which a peer of the realm, a member of the Church of England, preſided. That the Diſſenters in general rejoice in the extenſion of liberty to France, I ſincerely believe to be true; but it does not follow, that they exult in the horrors of a civil war, or feel pleaſure in contemplating the miſeries,

generally

generally the conſequences of great revolutions. If they have, in Mr. Burke's opinion, ſhewn too great an attachment to the democratic part of our conſtitution, they may remind him that there was a time when *he* thought it in danger, and curtailed the influence of the crown to preſerve it. They may think it is not yet ſufficiently ſecured from that influence, and as friends to *all* the parts of the Britiſh conſtitution, may offer the ſame apology, and in the ſame words, for preſſing topics in favour of the part they conceive to be in danger, that he has done for his late writings in favour of the regal power. For, ſays he, "as any one of the "great members of this (the Britiſh) conſtitu- "tion happen to be endangered, he that is a "friend *to all of them*, chooſes and preſſes the "topics neceſſary for the part attacked, with all "the ſtrength, the earneſtneſs, the vehemence, with "all the power of ſtating, of argument, and *of* "*colouring*, which he happens to poſſeſs, and which "the caſe demands *."

But no *colouring* can be Mr. Burke's excuſe for the manner in which he has treated Dr. Price and the Diſſenters *in his ſecond publication*; in which, among "the new principles of Whiggiſm, imported "from France, and *diſſeminated from diſſenting pul-* "*pits*, from federation ſocieties, and from the pam- "phlets which (as containing the political creeds "of thoſe ſynods) are induſtriouſly circulated in all "parts of the two kingdoms," we find the princi-

* Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs, p. 31.

ple

ple of Dr. Price, to which we have by way of example alluded before, converted into this, viz "that the people may lawfully depoſe kings, "not only for miſconduct, but *without any miſcon-* "*duct at all**." Through this whole work he takes for granted that Dr. Price and the Diſſenters hold this, with the other principles he deprecates, and therefore makes them the objects of his keeneſt invective. Yet, ſtrange to tell! the federation ſocieties he alludes to are *not diſſenting* ſocieties, and neither this principle, nor any of thoſe he has collected in order to execrate, are to be found in Dr. Price's Revolution Sermon, or have been *diſſeminated from a ſingle diſſenting pulpit!* And the only authority cited to prove theſe are the principles of *the Diſſenters*, is a pamphlet written by a profeſſed republican, and the ſubject of a foreign ſtate! It has been ſufficiently hard on the Diſſenters to have had imputed to them, as a body, the ſentiments of ſingle individuals from among themſelves, but it is doubly ſo to make them anſwerable for the opinions of a foreigner, with whom they have no connection.

To have their principles miſconſtrued, and the worſt deſigns unjuſtly imputed to them, is a treatment they have not now experienced for the firſt time. Sacheverell in his ſermon, preached againſt them nearly in the ſame terms uſed by Mr. Burke; and yet neither in Sacheverell's time, nor Mr. Burke's, could Britain boaſt of more loyal ſubjects,

* Appeal, p. 56.

or

or ſubjects more faithfully attached to the principles of the conſtitution. Sacheverell's words were, " that " the old leaven of their fore-fathers is ſtill working " in their preſent generation; and that this tradi- " tional poiſon ſtill remains in this brood of vipers, " to ſting us to death, *is ſufficiently viſible from the* " *dangerous encroachments they now make upon our* " *government, and the treaſonable reflections they have* " *publiſhed on her Majeſty, God bleſs her! whoſe* " *hereditary right to the throne they have had the im-* " *pudence to deny, and cancel, to make her a creature* " *of their own power; and that, by the ſame princi-* " *ples they placed a crown upon her, they tell us,* " *they (that is the mob) may reaſſume it at their* " *pleaſure.* Nay, now they have advanced them- " ſelves from the religious liberty our gracious " ſovereign has indulged them, to claim a civil " right, as they term it, and to juſtle the Church " out of her eſtabliſhment, by hoiſting their tole- " ration into its place; and *to convince us what alone* " *will ſatisfy 'em, inſolently demand the repeal of the* " *Corporation and Teſt Acts, as an eccleſiaſtical uſur-* " *pation, which, indeed, under her Majeſty (whom God* " *long preſerve for its comfort and ſupport) is the only* " *ſecurity the Church has to depend upon.*" Here Sacheverell charged the Diſſenters with holding that the people might reaſſume the crown *at their plea-ſure*; but as in another place in his ſermon he charged *all the friends* of the Revolution with teach-ing that kings may be depoſed whenever the people *think fit**, it is evident he meant to impute no more to

* See before.

them

them than to the *Whigs* in general: and *with them* the Diſſenters have not repined to take their lot.

But, ſay the High Church party, a Diſſenter will certainly endeavour to uſe all the influence he poſſeſſes in order to advance his own ſect, and ſo the public peace muſt be endangered by his admiſſion to offices. His excluſion therefore imputes to him only a virtuous attachment to his own peculiar principles, and the danger becomes the greater "the greater we ſuppoſe his virtues and abilities." An anſwer has been given to this argument already, I ſhall therefore only remark, that in this way of reaſoning his excluſion becomes not a brand of infamy, for, however unjuſt, it is at leaſt an honourable diſtinction. But the dangers to be apprehended from the influence of virtuous citizens, increaſing thus, in proportion as their virtues and abilities increaſe, are not, according to Biſhop Parker, to be diſregarded, and thus he proves it: "If "princes," ſays he*, "would but conſider how "liable mankind are to abuſe themſelves with "ſerious and *conſcientious villanies*, they would quick-"ly ſee it to be abſolutely neceſſary to the peace "and happineſs of their kingdoms, to ſet up a "more ſevere government over men's conſciences "and religious perſuaſions, than over their vices "and immorality; for *of all villains, the well-meaning "zealot is the moſt dangerous.* Indulgence and

* Preface to his Eccleſiaſtical Polity, p. 52.

 "toleration

" toleration is the moſt abſolute ſort of anarchy; " *and princes may, with leſs hazard, give liberty to* " *men's vices and debaucheries, than to their con-* " *ſciences.*" Upon this it has been obſerved, " That " according to Parker's propoſition, bawdy-houſes " are more tolerable than conventicles!" The Reviewer may poſſibly have adopted that notion, or may think, with the reverend fathers of the ſecond council of Nice, that " it would be leſs ſinful " to be naught with a woman," than to give occaſion for public ſcandal *by holding heretical opinions.* Thus may we be enabled to explain the dark hint he gives, that eccleſiaſtical diſcipline ought to be enforced. Then indeed the hierarchy might triumph; then indeed Diſſenters might tremble!

When the repeal of the Teſt Laws was firſt agitated in 1787, the Diſſenters in general were favourably diſpoſed to eſtabliſhments, and in a high degree friendly to the Church of England; but they expected that the general progreſs of liberality in the world would have made ſome impreſſion on that Church, and that upon barely requeſting a reſtoration of rights from the juſtice of the ſtate, they ſhould be permitted to enjoy them. They have been diſappointed; High Churchmen have inſultingly told them, that they muſt never expect favour, and that they can have dreamt only of friendly ſentiments towards the Church, for a wiſh to injure it belongs to all Diſſenters, which the Church muſt know by the ill-will it feels

to them. Of that ill-will they have indeed ſeverely felt the effects; detraction, falſehood, and forgery have not been ſpared to render their characters odious, and to injure their property; a bigotted mob has with fanatic zeal ſought to deprive their brethren of their lives, and plundered and deſtroyed their habitations.

Moderate men, accuſtomed to admire the eſtabliſhment as *a ſcheme of inſtruction*, well adapted in general to teach the duties of morality and religion to the people, have recoiled with horror at ſuch fatal effects from the perverſion of a religious inſtitution into an inſtrument of perſecution, and an engine for party politics. The diſciples of Prieſtley and Robinſon, both in and out of the Church, have increaſed in numbers. And this too at a time, when the clergy themſelves profeſs to feel no confidence in the ſtability of the eſtabliſhment. Even the *moſt diſtant probability* of the repeal of the Corporation and Teſt Acts has been an avowed reaſon for the *greateſt apprehenſion and alarm*; and the preference given by a few paupers to a *Diſſenting Sunday School* has ſtruck the clergy and inhabitants of a populous borough with terror and diſmay. In ſuch perilous circumſtances, High Churchmen may recollect that calumny and inſult have never conciliated affection; and that ſecret treachery, and open violence, cannot revive the confidence of friendſhip. When the Diſſenters ſhall again apply to the legiſlature for the repeal of acts by which they feel themſelves aggrieved, High Church-

men, yielding to the dictates of policy and fear, may drop their oppoſition to the claims of juſtice. They cannot make reparation for their *paſt* miſconduct, but they may proceed with greater moderation and honeſty *in future*. But ſhould they ſtill perſiſt, the ruin of their Church will probably record to poſterity, their folly, and their crimes.

THE END.